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Near East & South Asia

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Inter-Arab Affairs

League Head Says Taba Agreement Step To Full Peace

NC2509150095 Cairo Arab Republic of Egypt Radio Network in Arabic 1400 GMT 25 Sep 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Arab League Secretary General Dr. 'Ismat 'Abd-al-Majid has said that the agreement initialed by the Palestinian Authority and Israel yesterday is a step on the road to a just and comprehensive peace in the Middle East. It is based on all the UN resolutions on the Arab-Israeli conflict and the Palestinian issue, particularly UN Security Council Resolutions 242, 338, and 425 and the land-for-peace principle.

'Abd-al-Majid underlined the need for the peace march to take quicker steps along the Syrian and Lebanese paths in order to guarantee Israel's complete withdrawal from the occupied Syrian Golan Heights and Lebanese territory and to safeguard the Palestinian people's lawful rights, including their right to build an independent state on all the Palestinian national soil, with Jerusalem as its capital.

'Abd-al-Majid added that the consolidation of the peace march requires good will and confidence-building. This comes through taking the next steps quickly on all the tracks, believing that peace must be just, comprehensive, and based on the relevant UN Security Council resolutions.

Sa'id Kamal, Arab League assistant secretary general for Palestinian affairs, also commented on the initialing of the Palestinian-Israeli second phase autonomy agreement. He said that Israel is primarily responsible for implementing the agreement, particularly by pulling out of the cities and villages of the West Bank, as a first step toward restoring the national rights of the Palestinian people. He stressed that Jerusalem must be the capital of the Palestinian state.

Kamal pointed out that the Arab League expects to receive the official documents of the agreement.

League Official Assails Rabin Remarks on Jerusalem

NC2509153395 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1410 GMT 25 Sep 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Cairo, 25 Sep (MENA)—Ambassador Sa'id Kamal, Arab League assistant secretary general for Palestinian affairs, has stated that the League expects to receive the official documents of the Palestinian-Israeli agreement initialed in Taba yesterday, according to an agreement between Palestinian President Yasir 'Arafat and Arab League Secretary General Dr. 'Ismat 'Abd-al-Majid during a recent meeting.

Speaking to reporters today, Kamal said that Israel is primarily responsible for the honest implementation of the agreement. He called on Israel not to stall for time or procrastinate, and he underlined that the Israeli troops must withdraw from the cities and villages of the West Bank as a first step toward restoring the lawful national rights of the Palestinian people.

The assistant secretary general criticized Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhaq Rabin's statements concerning Jerusalem. He stressed that Holy Jerusalem must be reinstated as the eternal and historic capital of Palestine. He also criticized the terms the U.S. Congress has stipulated for a grant to the Palestinian National Authority, estimated at $100 millions. In return, they require the silencing of the Palestinian opposition on the political scene.

He said that the U.S. Congress seems not to hear or see Natanyahu, leader of the extremist Israeli Likud, when he speaks out against Yasir 'Arafat and the Palestinian people. He pointed out that Natanyahu wants to incite Israeli public opinion against the Palestinian Authority and 'Arafat.

Iraqi Foreign Minister Meets Arab League Chief

JN2209104695 Baghdad INA in Arabic 0930 GMT 22 Sep 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Cairo, 22 Sep (INA) — Iraqi Foreign Minister Muhammad Sa'id al-Sahhaf met Arab League Secretary General 'Ismat 'Abd-al-Majid at the Arab League headquarters yesterday evening.

A correspondent for the IRAQI NEWS AGENCY in Cairo said the meeting addressed current Arab issues and ways to promote joint Arab action to serve the Arab nation and safeguard its security, and enable it to face the challenges that seek to maintain Arab divisions.

Muhammad Sa'id al-Sahhaf briefed the Arab League secretary general on developments in Iraq's relations with the UN Special Commission. Al-Sahhaf stressed that Iraq has fulfilled all its obligations under Section C of Resolution 687. Thus, the Security Council must implement its commitments under Paragraph 22 of the same resolution and lift the Iraq embargo.

The conferees stressed the need to continue Arab efforts to promote joint Arab action to enable the Arab nation to face all challenges.

The meeting was attended by Sa'd 'Abd-al-Majid al-Faysal, senior Foreign Ministry under secretary, and Dr. Nabil Najm, Iraq's permanent representative to the Arab League.

Islamic Affairs

Political Islam Review: 'AQIDATI 12 Sep

NC2309074595

[FBIS Editorial Report] The following is a comprehensive review of all items in the 12 September edition of the Arabic-language newspaper 'AQIDATI that pertain to political Islamic issues.

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1. Samir Rajab Explains Newspaper's Policy
2. Court To Examine Suit Against al-Azhar Khitan Fatwa
3. Controversial Director Yusuf Shahin Prepares Another Film
4. Columnist Discusses Women's Rights in Islamic Societies
5. Al-Azhar Shaykh Explains Muslim Women's Dress Code
6. Islamic Researcher Criticizes 'Suspicious' Conferences
7. Israeli Intelligence Activity in Azerbaijan Viewed
8. Report Views Nato Air Strikes Against Bosnian Serbs

SAMIR RAJAB EXPLAINS NEWSPAPER'S POLICY

A 120-word report on page 1 quotes Samir Rajab, chairman of the board of directors of the newspaper, as saying that "'AQIDATI has made its presence felt in the religious and intellectual arena in Egypt through its firm policy and its objective discussion of topical issues." He adds: "We raise the weapon of rectitude against the extremist fundamentalists and the extremist communists." Islamist preacher Shaykh Ahmad Farhat praises the newspaper's objectivity in dealing with "thorny" issues, saying "this newspaper has gathered the ranks and unified the hearts."

COURT TO EXAMINE SUIT AGAINST AL-AZHAR KHITAN FATWA

A 75-word report on page 3 says the South Cairo Court will on 16 September examine the suit filed by the Egyptian Organization for Human Rights against the fatwa issued by Shaykh Jad-al-Haq 'Ali Jad-al-Haq, grand imam of Al-Azhar, sanctioning khitan or female circumcision. In defense of the fatwa, Shaykh Yusuf al-Badri, who prepared the fatwa on behalf of Jad-al-Haq, and other lawyers will submit "a Western report confirming that khitan prevents AIDS."

CONTROVERSIAL DIRECTOR YUSUF SHAHIN PREPARES ANOTHER FILM

A 50-word report on page 3 says the Islamic Research Center in al-Azhar has not yet received the scenario for the film "Ibn-Rushd," neither from the Artistic Works Quality Control Committee nor from the director of the film. The film's director, Yusuf Shahin, is preparing to produce this film to be among the films that carry the ideas of those who call themselves the "enlightened ones." Shahin is director of the controversial film "The Emigrant," said by many to portray the story of biblical patriarch Joseph, who according to Muslim tradition, was a prophet. Muslim teachings prevent the impersonation of saints and prophets. The film has been banned several times in Egypt.

Ibn-Rushd was an Arab philosopher born in Cordova in 1126. He died in 1198 and was known in Europe as Averroes.

COLUMNIST DISCUSSES WOMEN'S RIGHTS IN ISLAMIC SOCIETIES

A 500-word column by Basyuni al-Halawani on page 6 praises Mrs. Suzan Mubarak's speech at the World Conference on Women in Beijing, saying it "embodied Egypt's stand as an enlightened Islamic country that sets an example for other Islamic countries." In her speech, Mrs. Mubarak affirmed that the Islamic shari'ah has guaranteed women all rights. The columnist says the "Islamic shar'iah is not unfair to women and does not rob them of any political, economic, or civil rights." "However, our calamity is that in our public and private life we do not adhere to Islam. We then level strange accusations against our religion and shari'ah, run after misleading and glossy slogans, and repeat like parrots what the enemies of Islam at home and abroad say."

The columnist says the woman in the Arab and Islamic world is down-trodden and is denied her rights. "This is because the Muslim woman does not adhere to Islam's teachings, morals, and ethics. When our women adhere to Islamic ethics in their dress and behavior and in their patterns of life, all the causes of dissolution, marital treason, rape, divorce, suspicion, cheap treatment of the women, and other social ills will disappear" from our society. He adds that the "Western societies which are trying to forcibly impose their laws and philosophies on us suffer from all forms of deviation and moral dissolution as a result of the mad freedom given to women." "Therefore, the woman in our Islamic world need a new document linking her to their religion's teachings and explaining her rights and duties within the framework of her family and Islamic society."

AL-AZHAR SHAYKH EXPLAINS MUSLIM WOMEN'S DRESS CODE

On page 7, the newspaper carries a 1,000-word article by Shaykh Jad-al-Haq 'Ali Jad-al-Haq, grand imam of al-Azhar, on how a Muslim woman should dress. The gist of the article is that a Muslim woman should cover her head, hands, and legs, but not necessarily her face.

ISLAMIC RESEARCHER CRITICIZES 'SUSPICIOUS' CONFERENCES

A 1,000-word article by Islamic Researcher Dr. Abu-al-Wafa 'Abd-al-Akhir on page 6 criticizes the Population and Development Conference held in Cairo in September last year and the World Conference on Women held in Beijing in September this year, describing them as "suspicious." He says the world is suffering from the epidemic of "sexual deviation" and "family disintegration." The epidemic is transmitted through international seminars and conferences organized by "secret and strong organizations" that have "subversive" objectives. These conferences raise the slogans of "women and human rights," slogans that ostensibly preach mercy and kindness to women and mankind but which in fact subvert moral and social values. These conferences seek to undermine social principles represented by marital ties and equal relations between men and women and to replace them with abnormal sexual relations so as to spread social chaos and eliminate the standards of ethics and the yardsticks for measuring good and evil and virtue and sin.

ISRAELI INTELLIGENCE ACTIVITY IN AZERBAIJAN VIEWED

A 300-word column entitled "Before It Is Too Late" by 'Adil Dayf on page 20 discusses Israeli intelligence's assistance to Azerbaijan's intelligence in reorganizing itself. It says "the Arab and Islamic states will be the first to be harmed by the Israeli activity in the Islamic republics of the former USSR." It adds that "we must hasten to contain this Israeli activity and improve relations with the Islamic republics." It concludes that "we must strongly confront the Israeli activity in the Islamic republics before it is too late."

REPORT VIEWS NATO AIR STRIKES AGAINST BOSNIAN SERBS

A 400-word report by Ashraf Abu-al-Hawl on page 21 discusses the NATO air strikes against the Bosnian Serbs. It says "despite our full appreciation" of the Nato air strikes against the Bosnian Serb positions, "we must not be intoxicated with joy" and imagine that the West has ultimately become convinced of the need to establish a state in the heart of Europe in which the Muslims will have the "upper hand." The report adds that "it is clear that these painful strikes mainly aim to box the ears of the Serbs and not to cut their long arms."

Palestinian Affairs

Cabinet Passes Accord; Reservations Noted

JN2609055595 Jericho Voice of Palestine in Arabic 0508 GMT 26 Sep 95

[Report by 'Adil al-Za'nun in Gaza; from the "New Day" news feature]

[FBIS Translated Text] President Yasir 'Arafat left the homeland at dawn today for Tunis where he will chair a PLO Executive Committee meeting to make a decision on the Taba accord.

In its extraordinary session under 'Arafat in Gaza last night, the Palestinian Authority's cabinet approved the Palestinian-Israeli agreement which was initialed in Taba and which will be signed in Washington on 28 September.

Presidential Secretary al-Tayyib 'Abd-al-Rahim said that 'Arafat presented the text of the agreement with all its points and annexes to the cabinet, who discussed and signed it.

Sa'ib 'Urayqat, minister of local government, announced that the cabinet referred the Taba agreement to the PLO Executive Committee, which will hold a meeting in Tunis today to make a decision on the agreement. Ministers Samir Ghawshah and 'Abd-al-Hafiz al-Ashhab expressed reservations about a number of points in the agreement.

The cabinet discussed a number of other issues, particularly points connected with the Palestinian-Israeli agreement during and after the implementation of the new agreement.

'Arafat Briefs U.S., Other Envoys on Accord

JN2609073595 Jericho Voice of Palestine in Arabic 0600 GMT 26 Sep 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Immediately upon his return to the homeland yesterday from Amman, where he met with Crown Prince Hasan, 'Arafat received the U.S. ambassador to Israel as well as the representatives of the EU troika, Russia, and Norway to the Palestinian Authority. 'Arafat briefed them on the contents of the Taba agreement and the special arrangements for the signing ceremony in Washington.

'Arafat said: The Palestinian people and their national authority consider peace as their strategic option. The dawn has now appeared to all Palestinians, and the second phase of implementing the Declaration of Principles has started.

'Arafat hoped that the agreement will be accurately implemented. He stressed the need for world support to build the national bodies and infrastructure of the Palestinian economy.

On his way to Washington, 'Arafat is scheduled to stop over in Paris and meet with French President Jacques Chirac and in London to meet with British Prime Minister John Major.

'Arafat To Stop in Paris en Route to U.S.

LD2509184995 Paris France-Inter Radio Network in French 1800 GMT 25 Sep 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Hebron is the most controversial aspect of the agreement Yasir 'Arafat and Simon Peres reached with difficulty yesterday. The Israeli Army is to withdraw from the town within six months. It will stay only to protect the 400 Jewish settlers among the 120,000 Palestinians. Syria believes the agreement will make tension in the West Bank worse, while the Arab League sees the Taba agreement as a step toward peace.

The autonomy agreement will be signed in Washington on Thursday [28 September]. While en route, Yasir 'Arafat will stop over in Paris to see his wife and daughter, and to be received by Jacques Chirac at the Elysee Palace.

Hebron Mayor: Residents To Take Part in Elections

JN2509181095 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Arabic 1530 GMT 25 Sep 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Commenting on the Taba agreement, Hebron Mayor Mustafa 'Abd-al-Nabi al-Natshah said that the agreement has not completely resolved the Hebron issue, for it has left part of the city under Israeli control. However, he noted, large parts of the city will be under the supervision of the Palestinian Authority.

In statements to our correspondent Yasir 'Atilah, al-Natshah added that the residents of Hebron will take part in the elections, because participating in this day—which is being awaited by the Palestinian people to establish a Palestinian parliament—is inevitable.

Minor Disturbances in Hebron; Strike in Nabulus

TA2509184795 Jerusalem Israel Television Channel 1 Network in Hebrew 1800 GMT 25 Sep 95

[Announcer-read report]

[FBIS Translated Text] There were small-scale disturbances in Hebron today; no casualties were reported. A commercial strike was observed in Nabulus today to protest the death of three of the town's residents resulting from IDF [Israel Defense Forces] gunfire over the past week.

Last night, the Fatah leadership published a leaflet calling on West Bank residents to support the agreement reached in Taba.

Yusuf: Forces Ready To Assume West Bank Duties

JN2509172895 Jericho Voice of Palestine in Arabic 1200 GMT 25 Sep 95

[Reort by 'Adil al-Za'nun in Gaza; from "Today's Events" feature]

[FBIS Translated Text] Major General Nasr Yusuf, director general of the Palestinian National Security Forces, has asserted that the Palestinian forces are now prepared to take over their responsibilities in the West Bank. Maj. Gen. Yusuf, who returned to the homeland yesterday after touring several European countries, said: We now have more experience and we can take over powers in the West Bank, beginning with the city of Janin. He added that there would be approximately 6,000 Palestinian policemen and security personnel, and also announced that some 4,000 or 5,000 additional forces would return to the homeland to take part in these responsibilities.

Maj. Gen. Yusuf described the agreement that was initialed in Taba as a positive step toward entrenching the national authority over the Palestinian land, ending Israel's occupation, and establishing a Palestinian state.

Regarding his tour, which covered Germany, the Netherlands, Denmark, Norway, and Sweden, Maj. Gen. Nasr Yusuf asserted that financial aid was obtained to build a Palestinian police academy in the city of Nabulus, to train Palestinian forces, and to purchase equipment. He also pointed out that aid was also promised for the payment of salaries for the security and police forces. He then expressed his hope that peace will prevail in the region.

'Urayqat: Israeli Roadblocks Around Jericho To Go

JN2509180695 Jericho Voice of Palestine in Arabic 1400 GMT 25 Sep 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Local Government Minister Dr. Sa'ib 'Urayqat said that Israeli military roadblocks on Jericho area's exits will be lifted during the process of redeployment which will commence following the signing of Taba agreement in Washington.

In press statements at noon today, 'Urayqat said that the freed persons in Jericho [released prisoners that were stranded in Jericho after being forbidden by Israel to return their homes in the West Bank] will return to their cities, villages, and camps in the West Bank.

He said that the voting center for Jerusalem will be in the Central Post Office and that voters will not send voting cards via mail as some Israeli sources had said.

'Urayqat said a compromise agreement was reached on the Jiftlik area in Jericho. He said the Palestinian jurisdiction will be expanded to include this area and its citizens, and that civil powers there will be transferred to the National Authority.

PA's Quray' Comments on Hebron Settlers, Election

NC2509191595 London MBC Television in Arabic 1800 GMT 25 Sep 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Chief Palestinian negotiator Abu-'Ala' [Ahmad Quray'], who participated in the signing of the Palestinian-Israeli agreement yesterday, has said that he has fears regarding the future situation in Hebron. The best solution, he said, is for the settlers to leave the city. This came in an interview with our correspondent Nabil al-Khatib.

[Begin recording] [Quray'] Yes, I have fears. The best solution, in fact, is the departure of the settlers. We fought for three continuous months. The issue of Hebron was on the agenda of every round of talks. I am not very happy with what we finally reached, but this is all we could reach.

[Al-Khatib] Abu-'Ala', my last question is about the elections. It is now clear that the elections will take place in six months. But at that time, the Israeli elections will be right around the corner. Will this mean postponing the Palestinian elections? Is this possible?

[Quray'] No. The Palestinian elections will take place after the completion of the Israeli withdrawal from all cities, villages, camps, and all populated areas. When this withdrawal is completed, the Palestinian election campaign will start. My personal opinion— this was not discussed—is that it will be difficult to hold the elections before next spring. [end recording]

PA's Ghawshah: Israel Trying To Make Agreement 'Final'

NC2609074495 Cairo MENA in Arabic 0635 GMT 26 Sep 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Gaza, 26 Sep (MENA)—Dr. Samir Ghawshah, minister of labor in the Palestinian National Authority [PA], has praised the stance adopted by Egypt and President Husni Mubarak to serve Palestine. He said that Egypt intervened forcefully to overcome the obstacles to the Palestinian-Israeli negotiations.

Ghawshah told MENA's correspondent this morning before leaving Gaza for Tunis to take part in the meetings of the PLO Executive Committee that Palestinian unity is necessary and basic, irrespective of the differences in opinion and political stances.

He said his reservations over the Taba agreement do not mean he will avoid shouldering his responsibilities. He pointed out that everyone in the PLO operates in a democratic manner that prevents no one from expressing his opinion.

Ghawshah said the problem with the Taba agreement is that Israel is trying to make the transitional solution a final one. He pointed out that there are gaps regarding redeployment, the scheduling of its implementation, Hebron, the prisoners, and the detainees.

Qaddumi Criticizes Israel, Taba Agreement

JN2609075095 Amman AL-DUSTUR in Arabic 26 Sep 95 p 1

[FBIS Translated Text] Washington—QNA — Faruq Qaddumi, head of the PLO Political Department, describes the Taba agreement as "more proof of the Israeli rulers' disavowal of the principles on which a settlement was based and their efforts to divert the Palestinian track of negotiations from the course outlined in the Middle East settlement."

Abu-Middayn Sees Palestinian State in 2-5 Years

NC2509204095 Cairo Arab Republic of Egypt Radio Network in Arabic 1745 GMT 25 Sep 95

[Telephone interview with PA Minister of Justice Furayh Abu-Middayn by unidentified correspondent; place and date not given: from "The Talking Newspaper" program—recorded]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] [Correspondent] Mr. Furayh Abu-Middayn, the agreement on the expansion of Palestinian self-rule is a temporary agreement for a transitional period. President Yasir 'Arafat said it is a historic agreement that paves the way for a new Palestinian era. What will the Palestinian people gain from this agreement?

[Abu-Middayn] When the first step, the Gaza-Jericho accord, was taken, many skeptics said things would not develop, the Palestinian Authority [PA] would be stuck, and the Palestinians would get nothing more than Gaza and Jericho. Israel's sluggishness did delay this agreement a full year; we lost a full year, but we do not look back and cry over spilled milk. Things are moving—slowly and painfully, but they are certainly developing.

The agreement will open the door wide. In itself, the agreement is not an objective or an end; it is a means for getting to the final stage. So, as President 'Arafat said in his speech in Taba yesterday, it is good intentions that translate the spirit, texts, and seriousness of the agreement into reality. The agreement is big, extremely difficult, and there is major overlapping between us and the Israeli authorities. What we need, therefore, is determination and persistence. The Palestinian side will have the burden of proving itself in the West Bank as it did in Gaza and Jericho. But the Israeli side must deal with the agreement in good faith. So far, we do not feel...[pauses] apart from Shim'on Peres, all the negotiators were generals from the military authority. So we fear that the Army may interfere a great deal, because it was the Army that did the negotiating most of the time and on most of the items on the agenda.

So, in brief, the Israelis need to show good intentions to implement this agreement. It is premature to say that this agreement is 100 percent satisfactory. It is not the Palestinian dream, and it is not exactly what we desire. There are restrictions, obstacles; and many problems remain to be solved in practice: the redeployment, the stage after redeployment, the intertwining of powers, the geographic overlapping between areas A, B, and C — area C will remain under Israeli jurisdiction. In fact, there are things that will not be resolved except with determination. In short, the agreement is the beginning of a new era that will inevitably lead to a Palestinian state within two to five years at the latest. [passage omitted]

[Correspondent] Mr. Abu-Middayn, extremists on both sides are opposing the agreement. Likud leaders have rejected the agreement and said that if they take power they will not abide by it. How are you going to deal with these hindrances that will emerge during the implementation?

[Abu-Middayn] The Likud is talking about 1997. The elections will take place in November 1996. Even if the Likud wins, it will not assume power before 1997 or [words indistinct]. By then, the world will have changed a great deal and many new situations will have been created on the ground. Neither Likud, the Labor Party, or the extremist settlers will be able to turn history back. Perhaps the Jewish settlers will engage in acts of thuggery, but we will not be frightened. We have been the sons of this country for hundreds and thousands of years, and we will continue on the same line. So, this is election propaganda for next year. [passage omitted]

'Abd-al-Shafi: Palestinian State Now More Remote

JN2509150495 Jericho Voice of Palestine in Arabic 1200 GMT 25 Sep 95

[Statement by Dr. Haydar 'Abd-al-Shafi, former chief Palestinian negotiator, in Gaza on 25 September; from the "Today's Events" feature—recorded]

[FBIS Translated Text] Let me say that I am not satisfied with the [Taba] agreement. This is because, as we know, the peace process is based on UN Security Council No. 242, which states the inadmissibility of the acquisition of others' territory by force, and which calls for a full withdrawal from the occupied territories. Although the peace process has two stages, one transitional and the another final, the basic terms of reference should be respected, and the process should be heading toward a full Israeli withdrawal that terminates its presence on the occupied Palestinian territories. Consequently, I believe that the issue of our right to self- determination and the establishment of an independent state has become more difficult than ever before. This is my frank opinion about the agreement. However, let me say that regardless of those who are for or those who are against the agreement, I tell those who are for the agreement that what is going on does not indicate that we will achieve our objective of an independent state. Those who are against the agreement do not have an alternative. Thus, we should not exaggerate in denouncing the agreement. What counts is that all Palestinians should adopt a unified stand toward the Israeli violation of the international law, human rights, and the UN resolutions. I personally do not want this agreement to be a cause for new Palestinian differences and polarization, because this would be the most miserable situation. This agreement should lead us to a unified Palestinian position.

Hamas Spokesman Ghawshah Assails Taba Agreement

JN2509175695 Damascus SANA in Arabic 1455 GMT 25 Sep 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Amman, 25 Sep (SANA)—Engineer Ibrahim Ghawshah, official spokesman for Hamas [the Islamic Resistance Movement], has stated that the Taba accord is more dangerous and complicated than the Cairo accord, which was concluded in the aftermath of the Oslo accord.

In a statement here today, Ghawshah indicated that the Palestinian side has abandoned 70 percent of the West Bank territory and approximately 70 percent of the West Bank water resources in favor of the occupation authorities, per the accord. Moreover, this side has recognized Israeli security control over more than 90 percent of the West Bank territory, Ghawshah added.

Ghawshah went on to say that the most dangerous aspect of the new agreement is the fact that it has delineated the semi-final borders of the future Palestinian entity. He noted that this entity cannot be called a state, particularly since the capital Jerusalem has been dropped and since the components of sovereignty and borders have been relinquished. This agreement does not reflect the wishes of more than 1 million people. Worse still, he argued, the accord in no way reflects the wishes of some 6 million Palestinians living outside the self-rule areas.

With regard to elections, Ghawshah said that they will be partial and fettered by the Oslo accord. They will not reflect the wishes of the Palestinian people. Therefore, the Hamas movement will not take part in them. Regarding the issue of prisoners and detainees, he expressed concern that supporters of the self-rule authority might be the only ones who will be released, since there is a general understanding to keep the remaining detainees and prisoners off the Palestinian street.

The Hamas spokesman said the Taba agreement overlooked the fact that there are 300,000 settlers in Jerusalem and the West Bank. Besides, the city of Hebron, including the Ibrahimi Mosque, is a second victim that has been bypassed, just like Jerusalem. The Ibrahimi Mosque, along with the so-called Jewish sites in Nabulus and Bethlehem, will remain under Israeli control, Ghawshah maintained.

Ghawshah described the redeployment maps, which are an indivisible part of the Taba accord, as the embodiment of a dangerous crime, because they have divided the West Bank into small, heavily populated cantons. He asserted that the aim of the new agreement is to eliminate the Palestinian resistance.

More Comments by Ghawshah

NC2509190695 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran in Arabic 1730 GMT 25 Sep 95

[Telephone interview with Ibrahim Ghawshah, official spokesman of the Islamic Resistance Movement, by Jihad al-'Idan; place and date not given—recorded]

[FBIS Translated Text] [al-'Idan] Mr. Ibrahim Ghawshah, you told correspondents and journalists today that the Taba agreement poses a grave danger for the Palestinian situation and issue. What are your comments on this agreement; what are its dangerous aspects?

[Ghawshah] In the name of God, the compassionate, the merciful. The agreement reached in Tabah yesterday, which will be officially signed in Washington on Thursday [28 September], is dangerous for the future of the Palestinian issue. Why? Because this agreement sets the semifinal borders of the Palestinian entity and fixes the future features of self-rule in the West Bank. The final negotiations will have little affect on the contents of the Taba agreement, because the Zionists are not expected to make any concessions on basic issues. An example of this is Jerusalem: According to Rabin, Jerusalem is outside all these agreements. The Zionist government also insists on controlling the Jordan River and its valley and the eastern heights overlooking the valley. This agreement gives the Zionists more than three-fourths of the quantities of available water in the West Bank. The agreement has not given us any sovereignty over land. It has not dealt with the refugee and displaced persons issues, either directly or indirectly. For these reasons and others, Hamas views this agreement as dangerous to the future of the Palestinians.

[Al-'Idan] Does this agreement mean the Oslo parties have won? Does it mean that it is now difficult to reactivate and develop the intifadah?

[Ghawshah] No. I have explained the facts or symptoms. As to whether this agreement will succeed, we are sure it will not, especially as there are now approximately 300,000 settlers—140,000 in the West Bank and 160,000 in East Jerusalem. The presence of these settlers, who have racist ideas and carry out provocations, will compel the Palestinian people to confront them and their devilish plans. Therefore, analysts believe that the clashes between the Zionists and the Palestinian people will increase and intensify and will perhaps affect other areas that seem quiet now, like the Gaza Strip.

[Al-'Idan] Mr. Ghawshah, are there any specific steps, methods, or measures that can be used to confront this agreement, especially to expose it and explain its flaws and dangers?

[Ghawshah] To resist any conspiratorial Zionist onslaught against the Palestinian people, we must first expose this onslaught and enlighten the Palestinian people and the Arab and Islamic nation about its dangers in an objective way. Secondly, we must unite all sincere, honorable, nationalistic Palestinian factions—Islamists and non-Islamists—to confront this serious conspiracy. This can be done by organizing popular moves and clarifying positions through statements and marches that confront this onslaught. Thirdly — and this is an important point — the resistance to the occupation must remain unchanged; the occupation must be confronted everywhere that it exists . If these three things are done, then the Zionists' program, which challenges the Arab and

Islamic nation, can be countered, especially if Arab and Islamic support is added to this.

[Al-'Idan] There are undoubtedly popular reactions inside the occupied territories to this agreement. There are also official, popular, and individual positions by the Arabs and the rest of the world. How does Hamas view and evaluate these reactions?

[Ghawshah] We note that some Palestinian sectors have not taken to the streets to acclaim the agreement and express their false joy as was said during the Madrid conference and during the Oslo 1 agreement. On the contrary, in the West Bank in particular, there are confrontations in Hebron and Nabulus; there are martyrs and wounded. This is the genuine position of the Palestinian people on the agreement.

As for official positions, there has been no change. The Arab and Islamic countries that supported Madrid and Oslo 1 agreements are supporting Oslo 2, and the countries that opposed the conspiracy against the Palestinian people, both in Madrid and in Oslo 1 and Oslo 2, are clearly rejecting the agreement.

[Al-'Idan] Thank you, Ibrahim Ghawshah, official spokesman of the Islamic Resistance Movement, Hamas, for this important information on the News and Reports program. Thank you Mr. Ibrahim Ghawshah.

[Ghawshah] Thank you.

DFLP: Palestinians 'Big Losers' at Taba

JN2509181495 Damascus SANA in Arabic 1450 GMT 25 Sep 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Damascus, 25 Sep (SANA)— The Democratic Front for the Liberation of Palestine [DFLP] has condemned the new Taba agreement, which was initialed yesterday by Israel and the Palestinian self-rule authority in the presence of Yasir 'Arafat and Israeli Foreign Minister Shim'on Peres.

In a statement distributed here today, an official spokesman for the DFLP urged the Palestinian masses in the occupied territories and the Arab homeland to express their rejection of the new deal by staging popular marches and demonstrations on Thursday.

The spokesman asserted that the Palestinian people are the big losers in this agreement, because key issues such as sovereignty and control of land, water, crossings, borders, public security, economy, and the main living utilities will remain in the hands of the Israeli occupiers. This, he said, will increase the Palestinian people's fear that their right to repatriation to their homeland is being endangered under the Oslo-Taba agreements and that their identity is also being threatened to promote settlement and evacuation projects.

'Radical' Leaders Denounce Taba Accord

MS2609104495 London THE TIMES in English 26 Sep 95 p 12

[Report by Christopher Walker: "Radicals Challenge Arafat's Peace Deal"]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Jerusalem — Amid renewed clashes between Palestinian youths and Israeli troops in the occupied West Bank yesterday, radical Palestinian leaders denounced the peace deal negotiated between Israel and the Palestine Liberation Organisation.

Hamas (the Islamic Resistance Movement), the leading challenger to the PLO leader, Yasir 'Arafat, denounced the plan to extend self- rule to about a third of the West Bank and announced it would boycott Palestinian elections due in the spring.

"The deal has given Israelis what they wanted, said Ibrahim Ghawshah, a Hamas spokesman, in Jordan, where Mr 'Arafat flew to brief government officials. Mr 'Arafat will have talks with John Major in Downing Street tomorrow, on his way to Washington for the peace signing ceremony.

"Seventy per cent of the West Bank, 90 per cent of its security and two-thirds of its water will remain in Israeli hands," Mr Ghawshah went on.

"Of course, 'Arafat and the people of the Palestinian Authority are happy because, I am sorry to say, they can be given very trivial things and they are very happy for that. Actually they lost Palestine, they lost their land and they lost their people".

Syria, Libya and Iran also issued separate condemnations of the deal, while from Damascus the radical Democratic Front for the Liberation of Palestine called for a general strike when the deal is signed at the White House on Thursday.

The reaction reflected the split in the Arab world, with President Mubarak of Egypt and King Husayn of Jordan both agreeing to attend the Washington signing.

In the Israeli camp, militant Jewish settlers have vowed to resist by force the move of 12,000 armed Palestinian policemen to take up duties in the West Bank once troops pull back next month.

Settlers in Hebron, where 450 will remain in the city centre despite Arab protests, said they would attack the joint Palestinian- Israeli patrols that are designated to escort them at some points.

For Yitzhaq Rabin, Israeli Prime Minister, the main political test will come in the Knesset on Sunday, when — after it has already been signed — the deal will be submitted for approval in what could become a "no confidence" issue for his Government.

'Arafat's Critics: 'Worst Fears Realized'

MS2609112695 London INDEPENDENT in English 26 Sep 95 p 8

[Report by Patrick Cockburn: "Hebron Fears the Worst as Settlers Hang On"]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Hebron — "For Hebron this is not a good agreement," says Jamal Shubaki, chief representative here of Yasir 'Arafat, the morning after the terms for a partial Israeli withdrawal from the West Bank were agreed. The deal not only allows 400 Israeli settlers to stay in the heart of Hebron, he says, "but gives them a big district under Israeli occupation".

Mr Shubaki, local head of Fatah, the main Palestinian political organisation led by Mr 'Arafat, says he supports the peace deal as a whole "but in Hebron it will make the situation worse for Palestinians". Although Palestinians will get control of part of the city, the settlers' position will be consolidated in the rest. Mr Shubaki threatens that if the lives of ordinary people do not improve, Fatah "may decide not to take part in the elections (to the new Palestinian Council) next year."

Disagreements over the future of Hebron, capital of the southern West Bank, long held up the signing of a deal. In the nine days of talks Mr 'Arafat appears to have won only limited concessions on the city from Israel. "The people were looking for the settlers to be evacuated in this period," says Mustafa Natshah, mayor of Hebron, noting that the Palestinian delegation to the talks had not yet supplied him with maps showing what is to happen to his city.

He will not be pleased when he sees them. Khalil Tufakji, the Palestinian delegation's map specialist, says a swath of central Hebron, home to a small number of settlers, notorious for their ideological militancy and violence, will remain under full Israeli control. He says he was shocked when the Israelis first showed him a map of the new security zones last week. "It is a good agreement," insists Mr Tufakji, "But not in Hebron."

The fear of Hebronites is that Sunday's agreement locks in place a division of their city which will make it more and more like divide Jerusalem. Even though the 400 settlers are less than one per cent of Hebron's population, a zone of about 15 per cent of the city will be guarded by Israeli troops to protect them. To give access for these settlers, and a much larger group of 7,500 on the outskirts of Hebron at Qiryat Arba, bypasses are being built or planned, which means the loss of more Palestinian land.

Critics of Mr 'Arafat in Hebron, who last week said "they smelled a sell-out", said yesterday that their worst fears were realised. Khalid 'Umayrah an Islamic writer and commentator, says: "Hebron is going to be divided into different security zones. If you want to take a load of cabbages into the old city the Israelis will search every box of vegetables."

Could Hebron erupt into violence as the disappointment over the peace agreement sinks in? Mr 'Umayrah says this depends on who wins the Israeli elections in October next year. If it is the right-wing Likud, which is opposed to the present deal, confrontation will come nearer. If the economic situation and living conditions get worse, "the frozen rage of the people will explode".

Mr 'Umayrah and Mr Shubaki, from their opposite political points of view, say much will depend on the actions of the settlers themselves, who have an interest in sabotaging the accord by provoking an incident.

As Palestinians tried yesterday to assess what they had gained and lost under the 400-page agreement — Israeli reaction is limited, because yesterday was the Jewish New Year — most felt Hebron was the biggest disappointment. Elsewhere their negotiators got a little more than they had expected earlier in the month.

Mr Tufakji says the Israelis presented three different versions of their maps, which divided the West bank into three different zones, known as "A", "B" and "C". In five Palestinian cities in "A" zone the Palestinians will get full military police and civil powers. In the 450 towns and villages, home to 65 per cent of West Bankers, which fall into zone "B", the Israelis will retain military powers. In zone "C", which includes settlements, military installations and unoccupied land, Israel has full control.

The Palestinian negotiators in the Egyptian resort of Taba fought hard to ensure that they got more than just the land on which houses stood. Israel then grouped together Palestinian villages into blocks, which in the last days of the negotiations were given larger hinterlands. Surprisingly, these include heavily populated Palestinian areas like Abu Dhis and 'Azzariyah, just east of Jerusalem. This will make it impossible to expand Jerusalem eastwards to the outer ring of Israeli settlement such as one housing 20,000 Israelis at Ma'ale Adumim. Mr Tufakji says: "Some settlements have been left like islands — so maybe the Israelis want to get rid of them."

Many Palestinians believe success or failure of the agreement in reducing friction between Israelis and Palestinians depends on two factors: who wins the next Israeli election and what happens in Hebron. The deal has produced a jigsaw puzzle in which the authority of Israel and the 82-member Palestinian Council is meant to fit together. Mr 'Umayrah says: "The whole thing depends on good will" and he suspects there will not be enough of it to go round.

Commentary Calls Taba 'Bad Agreement'

MM2609145295 London AL-QUDS AL-'ARABI in Arabic 26 Sep 95 p 11

[Editorial: "An Agreement Not Inspiring Rejoicing"]

[FBIS Translated Text] The Palestinian National Authority and Israel have initialed an agreement on the expansion of self-rule so as to include the occupied West Bank. But it is noted that the signs of happiness and rejoicing have not spread among Palestinians the way they did with regard to previous agreements — which raises numerous question marks about the credibility of the peace process and the treaties and agreements it is producing.

This Palestinian caution is justifiable. The Cairo agreement signed a year ago amid extravagant ceremonies is still ink on paper, and most of its clauses have not been implemented and were referred, instead, to the Taba negotiations, which produced the recent agreement.

The detainees were supposed to have been released a year ago, and the same thing is being said about the elections which will be held next February. As for the fate of the secure road to link the Gaza Strip and Jericho, it is still not known and no reference is made to it in the Taba agreement.

What we want to say is that signing agreements does not mean that they will be implemented on the ground. Because the Israeli Government takes what it wants from them and backtracks on what it believes poses a threat to it. The security pretext is the justification for any violation of the agreements or noncompliance with some aspects of it.

The Taba agreement, like other agreements, includes positive and negative points. What is positive for the Palestinians is erodible, and what is negative for them is considered positive for Israel, which is why it will be implemented fully and will be binding.

The positive aspects of the agreement include the fact that the Israeli forces will withdraw from six cities and 412 Palestinian villages. But these cities and villages constitute no more than 30 percent of the area of the West Bank. The Palestinian police will not be able to ask any settler about his identity, and they will have to obtain prior permission from the Israeli authorities before taking any step outside their agreed areas.

Many people, including ourselves, had thought that the reason for prolonging the negotiations was the Palestinian negotiator's insistence on removing the settlers from the center of Hebron and returning the al-Ibrahimi Mosque and the other religious sites to Arab sovereignty, but we have discovered that the settlers are staying and that their protection will be the Israeli Army's job.

It is difficult for us to expect Palestinian police forces to be greatly welcomed in the city. It is difficult for us to expect Palestinian Authority candidates to win the seats allocated for the city and its suburbs in the next elections. Add to this the fact that the presence of the settlers will always remain a permanent source of provocation to the Arabs and a target for suicide operations, exactly likely the Nitsarim settlement in the Gaza Strip, whose three gates have witnessed three suicide operations so far, and more yet to come.

True, the Taba agreement has left matters suspended, has not settled all the issues, and has deferred the question of the settlers in Hebron until the negotiations on the final phase, but this delay will be at the expense of other issues that are more important such as the future of Jerusalem, the settlements, and the refugees' repatriation.

Perhaps the clause stipulating a phased withdrawal over 18 months is the biggest point of weakness in the agreement. Because Israeli elections will be held within a year at the most, that is before the withdrawal is completed. Accepting this clause is a risky Palestinian gamble, because a Likud victory in the elections would mean noncompletion of the withdrawal, if not the suspension of the agreement as a whole.

It is a bad agreement by all standards. But it is the outcome of a serious imbalance in the balances of power. And current Arab and international conditions cannot allow anything better. So it is better not to celebrate or express any signs of happiness or rejoicing. The Palestinian people did well when they expressed a lot of doubt and reservation.

Deportees Reject Libyan Offer To Return

JN2209161095 Jericho Voice of Palestine in Arabic 1400 GMT 22 Sep 95

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] A group of Palestinians expelled by Libya which is now stranded on the Libyan-Egyptian border has turned down a Libyan offer to return to Libya. The Palestine representative to the Arab League said it was necessary to provide work opportunities and places of residence for these Palestinians before they return to Libya. [passage omitted]

Algeria

FIS Issues 'Warning' to Would-Be Voters

MM2209143695 London AL-HAYAH in Arabic 22 Sep 95 p 6

[Report by Camille Al-Tawil: "Armed Islamic Grouping Warns Against Going Near Polling Booths; FIS Executive Committee Says: Algerian Elections Represent Nothing"]

[FBIS Translated Text] London — A high-ranking responsible official in the "Executive Committee" of the Islamic Salvation Front [FIS] announced yesterday that the Front rejects the presidential election scheduled to take place in November "irrespective of who the candidates may be."

Asked by AL-HAYAH about the Front's official position with regard to Lamine Zeroual's candidacy, the FIS responsible official said that the Front considers the election as "representing nothing," adding: "Our position is that we reject the election irrespective of who the candidates are."

The responsible official, who is a confidant of Shaykh Rabah Kebir, Chairman of the FIS Executive Committee, said that under the present conditions the election will only lead to the "escalation of the crisis instead of solving it" and "will not bestow legitimacy on anyone." He asked: "What change will there be if (President) Zeroual is succeeded by Zeroual."

Leaflets published by sources close to the FIS abroad yesterday continued their campaign against President Zeroual. The newspaper AL-SABIL [as transliterated], which is published by FIS "supporters" in Britain, a copy of which was received by AL-HAYAH, has described the election as a mere "piece of theater." It attacked Zeroual, saying that his hands were "smeared with blood" and that he "has now begun to exercise the powers of an elected president, having decided that the Algerian people need no new plan." The newspaper considered the election "a mere ploy aimed at gaining a false legitimacy and drawing a new map to invalidate the previous (legislative) elections, whose first round was won by the FIS but which was later annulled."

Meanwhile the Armed Islamic Grouping has issued a statement — a copy of which was obtained by AL-HAYAH from some citizens yesterday — in which it warned citizens against participating in the presidential election scheduled for 16 November.

AL-HAYAH had earlier reported the distribution of a statement in the same vein, bearing the "Grouping" name, at a mosque in Al-Abyar [as transliterated], a suburb of the Algerian capital, on 7 September. But the Grouping statement which AL-HAYAH obtained yesterday bears the date 8 September and the stamp of Grouping Amir Bouabderrahmane Lamine. In the statement the Grouping warned citizens against going anywhere near the polling booths.

The statement, numbered 39 and headed "A Warning to the Nation Against the Election," recalls the positions of the "Armed Grouping" which considered the elections "an act of infidelity," because they imply the possibility of "changing God's laws," "annuling God's ruling concerning apostates," "accepting and mixing with apostates," "consecrating the freedom to opt for infidelity," and "equating women with men"(...), and condining the wrong-doings and infidelities involved in democratic, polytheist elections."

The Grouping added in its statement that "By virtue of its responsibility for the Muslims in this country it wishes to warn the nation against pursuing this course, which God never decreed (...). It is your duty as Muslims to change this grave abomination, which involves infidelity to God, and not only to refrain from participating in it (...). Beware, Muslim masses. Do not go near the polling booths. Anyone who fails to heed this warning and suffers any harm will have nobody but himself to blame. Those who forewarn will be forgiven."

The Grouping's threat comes at a time when the Muslim opposition has escalated its campaign to frustrate the election. The past few days have witnessed a large wave of explosions aimed in particular at police stations and municipalities. Some of these explosions have destroyed whole quarters in addition to the intended targets. Last Sunday armed men assassinated Abdelhafidh Benhadid, an independent candidate in the election.

Benmansour: 'Terrorism' Will Not Obstruct Elections

LD2309155095 Algiers Radio Algiers Network in Arabic 1500 GMT 23 Sep 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Interior Minister Mustapha Benmansour stressed today that the state has taken all the measures that will allow male and female Algerians to perform their voting duty in a calm and secure general atmosphere.

In an interview with the daily EL-MOUDJAHID, Benmansour added that the security situation, about which some said hindered the progress of the presidential elections, particularly after the recently committed acts of terrorism in some municipalities in central Algeria, did not form a barrier before the normal progress of the upcoming elections.

Most Officers, FIS Chief Back Zeroual Candidacy

MM2509143195 London AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT in Arabic 23 Sep 95 pp 1, 4

[Report by Sami Dhubyan: "Nine Hundred Senior Officers Support Zeroual's Candidacy"]

[FBIS Translated Text] London — Nine Hundred senior Algerian officers have supported Algerian President Liamine Zeroual's candidacy in the presidential elections, scheduled for 16 November, while 150 opposed it and 450 abstained. This was announced by a prominent Algerian source, acting as a mediator between the government and the opposition in Algeria, who told AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT that Zeroual had informed the main opposition that, after the elections, he would grant a political amnesty and that he would form a coalition national unity government and deliver what he promised, namely to continue to hold elections to establish the other institutions of the republic. Meanwhile, sources close to the Islamic Salvation Front [FIS] said that two views prevailed among FIS leaders, the first completely opposed to the elections and Zeroual's candidacy, the second favoring Zeroual's candidacy on condition that he abides by his promises. From his prison, FIS leader Abassi Madani supported the second view.

Concerning the Army officers' position, the source said that the Algerian Defense Ministry had held a secret ballot involving 1,500 Algerian senior and middle-ranking officers, with the ballot result in favor of Zeroual's candidacy.

The ballot showed that those who had abstained and stood on the sidelines were classified as belonging to the opposition, and they adopted this position so as not to openly support Zeroual's opponents.

The source said that Zeroual found the outcome of the ballot satisfactory and encouraging, and based his candidacy in the elections on it. The source points to the fact that General Mohammed Lamari was the leader of the opposition officers, and said that he had left Algeria and traveled abroad.

The source said that Zeroual has informed the FIS and other national covenant parties that he has committed himself to granting a presidential amnesty to free all political detainees. Those charged with criminal offenses will not be included in the amnesty. A committee is to be formed to determine the cases of those detained or charged who would benefit from the amnesty.

In this context the source stressed that Zeroual has informed the FIS that the amnesty includes its leader, Abassi Madani, and his deputy, Ali Belhadj, who according to previous statements would not be included in any amnesty because he had incited and supported violence.

Zeroual also stated in the offer he made to the opposition that a coalition national unity government would be formed after the elections to make preparations for a new phase that will witness elections for the republic's institutions.

The source said that the Algerian authorities had adopted large- scale and enhanced security measures involving 12 main cities and including the capital and provincial cities, in which 50,000 soldiers are taking part, in order to prevent any major acts of violence in the cities before and during the elections. The source said that these measures are intended to thwart any acts of violence liable to attract media attention, especially since international observers will be following the election proceedings.

Meanwhile, sources close to the FIS said that FIS leaders in the country, abroad, and in detention centers have managed to crystallize an unofficial and undeclared position which calls for the acceptance of those elected, even if it is Zeroual, on condition that he sticks to his promises, especially that of ending the policy of eradication and exclusion used against the FIS and the other opposition parties.

The sources close to the FIS said that this was the view adopted after it was supported by FIS leader Abassi Madani, who was quoted as saying: "We want what is good for Algeria and whoever is capable of it or abides by it according to our religion and Shari'ah. We have never been an obstacle in the way of any good, although we doubt that those concerned can be men of good."

The other group has totally rejected the elections and Zeroual's candidacy, and is of the view that this candidacy in itself is illegal and not supported by any laws.

Interview With Presidential Candidate Malek

LD2509163495 Algiers Radio Algiers Network in Arabic 1224 GMT 25 Sep 95

[Report on interview with Redha Malek, National Consultative Council chairman, by unidentified correspondent at the headquarters of the Republican National Alliance; date not given; from the "Presidential Elections 95'" program]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] Ladies and gentlemen, God's peace and mercy be upon you: Algeria is about to hold the first presidential elections of their kind in the country's history. So far, some party figures, and others not representing any party, some of them well-known and others unknown, have announced their intention to run in these elections. These candidates include Redha Malek, one of the well-known political faces in the nationalist movement. He never stopped his political action and was entrusted with numerous responsibilities in the state institutions.

Recently, some sources have talked about the difficulties Malek is having to collect the necessary number of signatures to guarantee his candidature. The deadline set for this will end in just one week. How true are these reports, and what is the nature of these obstacles. The national radio met Redha Malek at the headquarters of the Republican National Alliance and held with him the following interview:

[Begin recording] [Correspondent] [passage omitted] There is only one week left to the end of the deadline given to candidates to collect the required signatures to ensure candidacy to these elections. Is it possible to know how far you have got in collecting these signatures, and if you are optimistic about this.

[Malek] Thanks for this initiative and for this interview, especially in the circumstances that we are living now as a presidential candidate [sentence as heard]. With regards to the question you asked me, I will say we are optimistic. The process began slowly as you know. More than 10 days were wasted in the beginning because of bureaucratic matters and obstacles. Thank God we have overcome them. On the other hand, we have some difficulties because we do not have a party that is structured at the national level, and this is the second obstacle. Third, naturally we have some problems with some administrative parties.

[Correspondent] Is it possible to know who are the parties [words indistinct] some obstacles.

[Malek] For example I was in Constantine, they told us that there were some individuals who went to some districts and told people not to sign for X, i.e. myself. This is on the one hand. Those people were, anyway, sent by some administrations. Second, in Ain Abid there was a brother who was collecting signatures on my behalf. They stopped him and took away 60 signed forms from him. He was taking them for endorsement. [passage omitted]

[Correspondent] Who took away the 60 forms from him?

[Malek] The security [forces]. They took him away and wanted to interrogate him. We will not decide on this issue until we know the circumstances and how to solve this problem.

These are matters that take place and these are the things I am talking about. There are many citizens who have committed themselves to the fight against terrorism and sympathize with us. Many of these people gave their signatures, but there are some threats. We are told to mind our business. These things happen and we mentioned them to the authorities more than 10 days ago. [passage omitted]

In any case we will talk about these points later on because they are extremely important. The credibility of these elections hinges on the behavior of the one-party system. Such a behavior is unacceptable. Moreover, now that President Liamine Zeroual has announced his candidature, this should not create within the administration some sort of obvious and overt bias.

[Correspondent] But the head of the state announced that the administration will remain neutral.

[Malek] Yes, the president has said a few things and has given guarantees. We were encouraged by these guarantees to enter this contest. However, we now feel that the administration is beginning to show some bias. This is a reflection of the culture of a one- party system [previous sentence spoken in French]. Because this is what the people were used to. Whenever a president ran in elections, everybody would automatically vote for him. They have not understood that we are in a different situation and that we are in the era of multiparty politics where, for the first time, presidential elections have become based on multiparty politics. Many people have failed to understand the meaning of multiparty politics.

We call on the citizens to help us more and to complete their favor to us so as to solve completely the problem of 75,000 signatures. We call on them to mobilize in strength in this last week, particularly in the capital, its outskirts, and some large cities. [passage omitted]

People who reported in a newspaper that we have obtained 14,000 votes are involved in what is called disinformation. This comes within the framework of a psychological action, which is condemned by ethics. The work of the press should be objective. [passage omitted]

[Correspondent] The head of state put forward a number of guarantees, including the invitation for international observers to supervise the elections. Do you think this gives more credibility to the elections?

[Malek] Naturally; we would say that as Algerians in Algeria we would prefer that purely Algerian institutions took charge with regard to problems concerning the elections and issues concerning the transparence of the elections. This would have shown the maturity of the country, the people, and the state. I think it is extraordinary to say that foreign observers would be brought in. If the situation is as you say, then our establishment is not strong enough. If there are to be foreign observers, will theirs be a moral role, or will they play a role in the field?

I met the UN Secretary General's envoy at his request. Naturally he said that the monitors would not directly enter the field; the idea perhaps is for them to bring credible personalities at an international level to Algeria in order to observe and monitor what takes place. I believe that this is a UN idea, but we do not know what the envoy did on his return to New York, or the outcome of his mission. [passage omitted]

As I said to you, we should rely on God and ourselves. Algeria has always relied on itself and on the people. We have entered this battle and we have total confidence in our people; they should be vigilant with regard to this election so that no ambiguity or foul- play can take place. We believe in this.

[Correspondent] Mr. Malek, since national institutions have been mentioned, there is the independent national commission for monitoring the elections. How do you view this commission and its role? Do you think it will carry out its duties in the best manner?

[Malek] This is a second institution. It must play a major role. Its role is not only the elections per se; it also has a role at this stage of collecting signatures. This should have been included among its powers. It has not become active in this field until now. It is still new. The commission members have started to meet, know the place of their meetings, and how to organize their work. [passage omitted] Anyhow, we have a representative who attends the meetings, but we have not yet reached any tangible results.

Concerning the activity of this institution, we say that it should carry out its role as stipulated. The credibility of the elections is conditional on the role played by this organization, or institution. [passage omitted]

[Correspondent] Mr. Malek: The list of presidential candidates is now clear. What do you think about these candidates?

[Malek] As a candidate I cannot pass judgement on the other candidates. Every one of them is in the race and will see what luck will bring them. So far we have been active and we have been working. We were in Constantine [eastern Algeria] where we met the citizens. There is some kind of optimism. In any case there is a response. What has encouraged me in these elections is that the people have shown awareness. This is important. Some group said: Let us boycott these elections. We said that we must see what can be done. We cannot stay on the sidelines as onlookers and be critical. We said that we had to enter the fray. So we have entered the fray, putting our trust in our institutions. However, as I have already said, our institutions must play their part because if they do not play their part and if these manipulations — such as the ones we saw in Constantine — persist, matters might get difficult and credibility might suffer.

We have to be realistic because this is a major wager and the state and the administration must play their part and be wary of these manipulations, especially because after the president of state announced his candidature they have suddenly become biased. This will lead to the failure of these elections and credibility will be totally lost. We must be wary of this and I myself as a free and objective citizen would like to give this advice if I may: If there is any chance for these presidential elections to be truly free, for the first time ever, it would be in the interests of all parties concerned to play their part objectively.

Enough of the behavior of one-party [rule]. We know that it was officially announced that a former president had obtained 97 percent of the vote, but years later we learned that he probably did not even obtain 18 percent. These things existed at that time. Today we had better avoid such behavior altogether because it would lead to an impasse. The crisis is serious and if we want to get out of it there must be this clarity for the first time. That is what I say, and we cannot say any more or any less.

[Correspondent] Mr. Malek, how do you see the running of the election campaign after 2 October 1995 with regard to the media's role in it, the organization of rallies...

[Malek, interrupting] At any rate, the media have an essential role to play because as you know there are security problems and we cannot gather large numbers of people at rallies every time. We cannot hold large seminars or popular rallies because we have the problems of violence, terrorism, and security. Therefore, the national radio, which is state-owned any way, must play its role up to the required standard since there are no free independent radios. Journalists and the officials responsible for national television and radio must play their role with all the necessary rigor. They must not try to favor one candidate against another, whether in a radio interview or commentary. This is a very difficult thing.

[Correspondent] Where is your manifesto, Mr. Malek?

[Malek] At any rate, we have good faith and request our brothers in radio and television, not as a warning or anything because they are responsible people and citizens who have the right to express themselves. We want these elections to be an opportunity for us, the Algerian people, and all the institutions, be it the media institutions or the others, to be on the level so that we do not embarrass ourselves, or embarrass Algeria. [passage omitted]

[Correspondent] Fine! Can we know the general outlines of the manifesto of Mr. Redha Malek as a candidate for the post of the presidency?

[Malek] Included in this...

[Correspondent, interrupting] Have you finished preparing this political manifesto?

[Malek] Anyway, we will present our program God willing, by the end of this month [September]. We have repeatedly said that the problem of a program is not a real one. All people could present programs or new enriching ideas. What really matters is the implementation [of a program]. [passage omitted]

We have also to revive the economy. To do so we have to have a wise and firm policy in this field. Anyway, we will come back another time and talk about our political program, God willing. [passage omitted] [end recording]

Trade Ministry Official Announces Candidacy

LD2309174395 Algiers Radio Algiers Network in Arabic 1700 GMT 23 Sep 95

[FBIS Translated Text] A new personality has decided to enter the presidential election whose first round is scheduled for 16 November. The matter concerns Mr. Souakri Nasreddine, who this afternoon announced at the El-Djazair Hotel in Algiers his intention to be an independent candidate in the forthcoming presidential election. Mr. Souakri pointed out that the main reason for his nomination is the dramatic situation in the country. He reaffirmed on the other hand his ability to collect the required 75,000 signatures during the specified period. Mr. Souakri Nasreddine is 41 years old and is a regional inspector in the Trade Ministry.

Candidate on 'Active' Boycott of Election

LD2309205295 Paris Radio France International in French 1830 GMT 23 Sep 95

[FBIS Translated Text] In Algeria, as presidential elections draw near, another head of one of the parties belonging to the Rome group, Ahmed Benmohamed, president of the Muslim Democratic Algeria Movement, has announced his candidacy. The Rome group of parties has called for a boycott of the electoral process. This evening, Ahmed Benmohamed asserted that his decision did not at all contradict his party's stand alongside the other signatories to the Rome agreement.

[Begin Benmohamed recording] We said that a passive boycott will not solve the problem. That is why we have indicated our desire to act within the context of what might be called an active boycott — in other words, being present within the political arena, while at the same time trying to ruin the government-sponsored festivities which the presidential election represents. After all, wars — political or otherwise — are not won by leaving the battlefield. So, neither before nor after this announcement are we backing down from our prior commitment. We have talked about opposing this election; the majority of the seven other parties [in the Rome group] have decided on a simple, straightforward boycott, which I call a passive boycott, whereas we have opted for an active boycott. The others know this. Our fellow signatories are well aware of our attitude and of our strategy. [end recording]

Author Announces Candidacy in Elections

LD2409133495 Algiers ENTV Television Network in Arabic 1200 GMT 24 Sep 95

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] Abdelkadr Khaled, born on 20 March 1944, married and father of five children, announced today at Tahar Djaout Press House his intention to stand in the presidential elections.

Khaled is an Algerian author. [passage omitted] He is the founder and current chairman of the Algerian forum of authors and intellectuals.

Insurance Official Runs as Independent Candidate

LD2509212895 Algiers ENTV Television Network in Arabic 1900 GMT 25 Sep 95

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] A new name is being added to the list of those who want to stand as candidates in the presidential elections, which are expected to take place in November.

Aoued Zerrigi who was born in the fifties is married and is the father of three children. He is an official at the insurance company. He put his name forward as an independent candidate. We will know more about him in the following statement he made today, which was recorded for us by our colleagues in Oran.

[Begin Zerrigi recording] In the name of God, the merciful, the compassionate. Algerian men and women. Peace and blessing of God be upon you.

Brothers, I am not one of those who was born in the years of the immortal war of liberation nor am I one of those responsible for the tragic conditions that had torn apart the entity of this nation. My zeal for this cherished nation prompted me to stand as a candidate in the coming presidential elections. [passage omitted]

I appeal to you young generation, because you are the major and basic force in this homeland to commit yourselves to discharging your duty in the service of this dear country. Give me your confidence in engaging the election battle. I appeal to all sincere men and women in Algeria to support me in these elections. My projects in the education sector aim to make a break with the old methods and put a radical end to the failed and imported experiments. [passage omitted] [end recording]

UGTA Leader Comments on Presidential Elections

LD2609082395 Algiers Radio Algiers Network in Arabic 0600 GMT 26 Sep 95

[FBIS Translated Text] In a statement to AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT, Mr. Abdelhak Benhamouda, secretary general of the General Union of Algerian Workers [UGTA], has said that Algerian workers consider the issue of the presidential elections to be one of the most important current issues. Mr. Benhamouda also indicated that he has not put himself forward as a candidate in the presidential elections for basically objective reasons.

Regarding the candidacy of Mr. Liamine Zeroual in the presidential elections, he said that every Algerian enjoys civil and political rights and is free to stand. On the other hand, he said that the parties and armed groups in Algeria are not capable of obstructing the forthcoming elections.

Bomb Explodes in Police Station; 4 Killed

LD2509221395 Paris Radio France International in French 2130 GMT 25 Sep 95

[FBIS Translated Text] In Algeria, four people were killed when a bomb exploded at a police station in Tizi Ouzou. The bomb was hidden in a bag seized by police in a raid against unregistered merchants. The bomb exploded when a police officer attempted to open the bag.

Zeroual Appoints New Governors for Bouira, Tlemcen

LD2309164295 Algiers Radio Algiers Network in Arabic 1600 GMT 23 Sep 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Mr. Liamine Zeroual, the state president, has carried out a slight change of governors, according to a statement from the state presidency today. According to this change, Lakhdar Bennacir Noureddine, the governor of Bouira, has been removed from his post, and Mr. Ammar Djilali, who was governor of Tlemcen Province, is appointed in his place.

Mr. Merzouk Larbi, who was the secretary general of Tlemcen Province, is appointed governor of Tlemcen.

Egypt

Mubarak Discusses Taba Agreement, Washington Visit

NC2609081495 Cairo MENA in Arabic 0700 GMT 26 Sep 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Cairo, 26 Sep (MENA)—President Husni Mubarak has stressed that the agreement to expand Palestinian self-rule, which was initialed recently in Taba, represents a very successful achievement by the Palestinian and Israeli sides.

In a statement to "Good Morning Egypt" and "Nile Channel" today, President Mubarak said the two sides would never have reached this agreement without their strong desire and resolve. He said he interceded repeatedly and sent an envoy to Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhaq Rabin. He also had several contacts with Palestinian President Yasir 'Arafat to overcome the points of dispute impeding the road of negotiations, including the status of Hebron.

President Mubarak said the outcome of the Palestinian-Israeli negotiations was extremely good on the road to a final solution. He noted that the final negotiations will be held next year or perhaps in six months. Mubarak added that U.S. President Clinton has voiced appreciation for Egypt's effective role since the start of the peace negotiations. President Clinton has invited President Mubarak to attend the signing ceremony of the agreement in Washington on Thursday [28 September].

President Mubarak said the signing of the agreement pertaining to the second phase of Palestinian self-rule will not affect the peace talks on the Syrian and Lebanese tracks with Israel. But he pointed out that it is better for the [Lebanese and Syrian] negotiations to proceed along two parallel tracks.

Touching on the points of dispute between the Palestinian and Israeli sides concerning the town of Hebron, President Mubarak said it has been decided to postpone a point of dispute over Hebron until the final negotiations and to refer it to a committee for resolution within six months. He said the results that have been achieved to date are satisfactory. He noted that this special committee will discuss the issue of settlers inside Hebron and it might be added to the final negotiations on the final status of Palestinian land, including Jerusalem.

Asked whether a tripartite summit will be held among President Mubarak, King Husayn of Jordan, and President Clinton on the sidelines of the signing ceremony, the president said there is no problem with meeting King Husayn, 'Arafat, or Rabin. He said he will meet President Clinton. He will also meet King Husayn, who was in Egypt in August, adding that there is no problem between the two countries. He said that if some media have said some things, they have not affected Egypt's relations with Jordan.

Mubarak Says Palestinians To 'Get Their Independence'

NC2609082295 Cairo MENA in Arabic
0656 GMT 26 Sep 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Paris, 26 Sep (MENA)—President Husni Mubarak has asserted the need to continue negotiations between the Palestinian and the Israeli sides until peace is realized. He pointed out that the two sides' respect for the articles of the Declaration of Principles will lead to a crushing defeat of their enemies.

President Mubarak, in an interview with the French newspaper LE FIGARO published today, said he is convinced that terrorism will not stop the agreement, which expresses the will of the Palestinian people. He pointed out that these people have suffered a great deal and now want to build up their country.

He said the agreement could lead to a feeling of failure among the extremists and that the Palestinians will eventually get their independence.

President Husni Mubarak told LE FIGARO that if the Likud Party succeeds in the Israeli elections next year—at a time when the Palestinian-Israeli agreement has already been signed and is in the process of being implemented—it will be very difficult indeed to go backward.

President Mubarak expressed his belief that Palestinian President Yasir 'Arafat will win the elections in the autonomy regions slated for March 1996. He pointed out that most residents are opposed to Hamas.

President Husni Mubarak highlighted the role that he and his government played with both sides to reach a result in the Taba negotiations.

President Husni Mubarak said that despite the rejection Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhaq Rabin has expressed regarding the establishment of a Palestinian state, the Palestinians will ultimately get their independence.

On the assassination attempt against him in Addis Ababa in June, Mubarak said he expects there is a connection linking all such attacks. He gave as an example the attack on the World Trade Center in New York in 1993, events in Algeria, and events in France.

President Mubarak said all these incidents stem from a single source.

Paper Criticizes Rabin Statements on Jerusalem

NC2609074395 Cairo MENA in Arabic
0505 GMT 26 Sep 95

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] Cairo, 26 Sep (MENA)—Today's Cairo newspapers say the success of the Palestinian National Authority in reaching an agreement to expand the scope of Palestinian self-rule in the West Bank after very difficult negotiations reflects the Palestinian and Israeli desire to render the Declaration of Principles a success. The papers note that the agreement reached in Taba is considered the beginning of the implementation of the second stage of the Declaration of Principles.

The Egyptian newspapers emerged today with their main headlines highlighting U.S. President Bill Clinton's invitation to President Husni Mubarak, King Husayn of Jordan, Spanish Prime Minister Felipe Gonzalez, and the foreign ministers of Russia and Norway to attend the official signing ceremony of the agreement in Washington.

The newspapers also highlighted on their front pages that President Mubarak will, during his 48-hour visit to Washington, meet U.S. President Bill Clinton and ranking officials in the U.S. Administration to discuss peace and bilateral relations.

The comments of AL-AHRAM, AL-AKHBAR, and AL-JUMHURIYAH revolve around the Palestinian-Israeli agreement signed in Taba and the circumstances that surrounded it. [passage omitted]

The newspaper AL-AKHBAR, in its editorial, criticized statements by Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhaq Rabin in which he announced that he rejects the establishment of a Palestinian state and insisted that Jerusalem will remain the eternal capital of Israel. The paper said that such statements harm the peace process between the Palestinian and the Israeli sides. They also restrict the efforts of other parties in the region toward this peace.

The newspaper added that this strange method Rabin always uses could plunge the whole region into the darkness that engulfed it previously. Such methods could also ignite differences, which we can do without now.

The newspaper urged the United States, as a full partner in the peace process, to use this role at least to counsel its loyal ally in the region to stop making statements that harm and delay the peace process and that ultimately bring no benefit.

Croatian Authorities Arrest 'Terrorist' Qasim

NC2609103795 Cairo AL-AHRAM in Arabic 23 Sep 95 p 1

[FBIS Translated Text] Terrorist Tal'at Fu'ad Qasim, alias Abu-Talal al-Qasimi, one of the most dangerous fugitive terrorists abroad, has been arrested by the Croatian authorities.

AL-AHRAM's correspondent has learned that Tal'at Fu'ad Qasim, who was the media spokesman for the so-called Islamic Group abroad, escaped from Denmark to a military zone in Bosnia-Herzegovina but the Croatian security authorities discovered his identity and arrested him.

Responsible sources said the Higher Military Court passed a death sentence against the terrorist in December 1992 in connection with "the returnees from Afghanistan" case, which was investigated in Alexandria. Qasim is one of the most prominent wanted fugitive terrorists abroad. He was previously charged in the al-Jihad organization case of 1981 and spent three years in prison. Later he left for an Arab country and from there to Pakistan. He lived in Peshawar, where he published the magazine "AL-MURABITUN."

The sources pointed out that Tal'at Fu'ad Qasim moved from Pakistan to Denmark three years ago and obtained political asylum there. In Denmark, Qasim resumed his media activities in the name of the terrorist group. Judicial sources said this terrorist's name was mentioned in several terrorist cases recently, the last of which was case no. 234 of 1995. Qasim travelled to several European and African countries, including Sudan, over the past three years.

Islamic Group Warns Croatia of 'Enmity'

MM2509163395 London AL-HAYAH in Arabic 23 Sep 95 pp 1, 6

[Report by Kamil al-Tawil and Muhammad Salah: "Egyptian 'Group' Threatens To 'Retaliate' Against Croatia"]

[FBIS Translated Text] London, Cairo — The Egyptian Islamic Group warned Croatia yesterday of the consequences of putting itself in direct enmity with the Islamic tendency following reports of the "abduction" from its territory of Fu'ad Tal'at Qasim, who is in charge of information and its spokesman there. The threat came in a statement issued by the "Islamic League of Those Applying the Book and the Sunnah." AL-HAYAH has obtained a copy of the statement in Cairo.

The league, which includes the Group's leaders and is based in London, threatened to carry out reprisal operations if its official is not released and handed over to the Egyptian Government.

From London yesterday AL-HAYAH contacted Tal'at Qasim's wife, Mrs. Amani Faruq, in Denmark and asked her about the circumstances of her husband's disappearance. She accused of the Croats of "involvement" in his "abduction" and urged them to release him.

The wife of Qasim, who is known as "Abu-Talal" and has been sentenced to death in absentia in Egypt, pointed out that her husband had wanted to travel to Bosnia to prepare a book on its tragedy, to ascertain some of the facts, and to obtain live testimonies to include in his book. She added that to that end he had submitted an application for an entry visa to the Croatian Embassy in Brussels on 8 August. But embassy officials told him that that required approval from Zagreb itself, because Qasim, who has changed his name legally to Ibrahim Ya'qub 'Izzat, is using a document attesting that he has been granted political asylum in Denmark.

She went on to say that Zagreb had granted him an entry visa on 11 September and that he had booked a flight for Croatia the following day, Tuesday, aboard a Croatian Airlines plane. She said that her husband entered Zagreb airport "normally" and that a translator known to him met him there. But he could not book a hotel room and so stayed with the translator as a guest of one of the latter's neighbors.

Mrs. Amani added that the Croatian police "stormed" the translator's house at midnight on the night her husband arrived in Zagreb. The police enquired about the "bearded person" (Tal'at Qasim) and were told that he was in the house next door. She said that the police arrested her husband, the translator, and the neighbor in whose house he had spent the night, and that the translator and the neighbor were released on Friday. "They were told that Abu-Talal had left the country." The police did not specify the destination of the Islamic Group official.

As soon as reports of Qasim's disappearance spread, his lawyer in Denmark made a move in coordination with the Danish Foreign Ministry to discover his fate and to request that Croatia clarify the circumstances surrounding his disappearance. The Croatian Foreign Ministry replied to Copehagen's inquiry through a statement handed to the Danish Consulate in Zagreb, in which it pointed out that Tal'at Qasim had left Croatia for an unknown destination. The reply, of which AL-HAYAH has obtained a copy, said that the police found the Egyptian oppositionist on a Zagreb street, that he had no identification documents on him, and that as a result of interrogation he was proved to have "violated" the laws concerning foreigners' residence and movements in Croatia and so was referred to a court in the capital. The Croatian Foreign Ministry added in its reply that on 14 September the court fined Ibrahim Ya'qub 'Izzat (Tal'at Qasim) 147.80 kunas, ordered that he should not enter Croatia for a whole year, and instructed him to leave the republic's territory within 24 hours. It added that it was discovered on 18 September that Qasim was no longer in Croatia and that "his whereabouts since the court's decision are not known. He is assumed to have departed Croatian territory in accordance with the court's decision."

AL-HAYAH asked Qasim's wife over the telephone from London about her response to the statement. She said: "It is unacceptable, either rationally or logically." She went on: "I hold the Croatian authorities responsible for his safety, since he disappeared inside the territory of that state." Asked about the "background to his abduction," she pointed out that he is "wanted" by more than one quarter. She said that he had with him a legal entry visa. She urged "international organizations and all those concerned with human rights to intervene with the Croatian Government to discover his fate." Qasim has five children and a sixth is on the way.

In Cairo it has been learned that the outlawed "Islamic Group" organization in Egypt yesterday went into serious crisis after the Croatian authorities arrested one of its most prominent founders and leaders. The "Islamic League of Those Applying the Book and the Sunnah," which is based in the British capital, issued a statement yesterday of which AL-HAYAH has obtained a copy and which was entitled "Shaykh Abu-Talal and the Croats' Treachery."

Having pointed out the circumstances of Qasim's trip to Croatia, the statement warned Zagreb that by embarking on its present course it has put itself in a position of direct hostility to the Islamic tendency. It added: "Without doubt Croatia has pushed itself into a conflict that could make it a direct target for Islamist reprisals, since Shaykh al-Qasimi [as published] is popular among Muslims worldwide, regardless of their nationality, including the Croatian Muslims themselves."

In its statement the league called on Islamic groups, tendencies, and organizations to intervene and do their duty in support of Shaykh al-Qasimi. It stressed that Croatia "is entirely responsible for any harm to Shaykh al-Qasimi, whether this harm is committed directly by it or through those who are lying in wait for him." The statement did not rule out the involvement of Egyptian security services in the incident, with U.S. help States or incitement. The statement concluded: "With the Croatian Government's position, a new state has been included on the list of states blatantly hostile to Islam, of states that have ignored the laws and conventions they talk about and let their alleged freedom and democracy go to Hell. "And soon will the unjust assailants know what vicissitudes their affairs will take." [Koranic verse]

As is known, Tal'at Fu'ad Qasim is a founder of the Islamic Group in Egypt. He is an engineer and a prominent member of the organization's shura council. He was arrested for the first time in 1981, when his name was mentioned in the decisions issued by al- Sadat in September in the same year. He left Egypt in the mid-eighties for Afghanistan, where he fought alongside the mojahedin against the Soviet occupation. He stayed for some time in Pakistani Peshawar, where he published the magazine AL-MURABITUN, the organization's mouthpiece. Then he moved to Denmark and submitted an application for political asylum. The Danish authorities agreed to grant him asylum after he was sentenced to death in absentia by the High Military Court in Alexandria in December 1992 following his conviction in the case of the "Returnees from Afghanistan."

President Husni Mubarak has on several occasion warned the European states sheltering Egyptian extremists that they will suffer from terrorism. He was surprised at their decision to grant these people political asylum and to prevent them from appearing before Egyptian courts or to prevent the implementation of the sentences passed against them.

The Egyptian Government is making efforts to conclude extradition agreements. But its efforts to have the extremists present in Europe extradited have not succeeded, while the agreements with Arab states have produced positive results, as Egypt has managed to have more than one extremist who sought refuge in Arab states extradited.

Croatia Threatened With 'Revenge'

MM2509133195 London AL-HAYAH in Arabic 25 Sep 95 pp 1, 6

[Report by Muhammad Salah: "Vanguards of Conquest Threaten Croatia With Revenge If It Extradites 'al-Qasimi'"]

[FBIS Translated Text] Cairo — The issue of the arrest of Engineer Tal'at Fu'ad Qasim, known as "Abu-Tallal al-Qasimi," spokesman for the Islamic Group in Egypt, who was arrested by Croatian authorities 13 September, has witnessed new complications. The issue has forged rapprochement among the religious groups fighting the government in Egypt, despite the disputes among them. The "Vanguards of Islamic Conquest" organization has announced that it will carry out "severe" reprisal operations against Croatian and Egyptian targets if al-Qasimi is extradited to Egypt. It has been learned that Egypt has submitted a request in this connection.

In a telephone statement to AL-HAYAH a spokesman for the organization warned that "any state that has extradited or will extradite any members of the religious groups to the Egyptian Government will be a target for severe reprisal operations." The spokesman pointed out that "all religious groups — despite their different names — are seeking one aim." He added that "since all Islamic movements are working for one aim, the Vanguards of Conquest supports the Islamic Group and strongly stands by it, and it vows to launch an operation bearing Tal'at Fu'ad Qasim's name if something sinister happens to him."

Muntasir al-Zayyat, Tal'at Qasim's lawyer in Egypt, yesterday submitted a request to the office of the UNHCR in Cairo "to intervene to protect Qasim, on the grounds that he is a political refugee in Denmark." He said that the Croatian authorities' arrest of Qasim "is a violation of the principles of international law and of the United Nations, which hence necessitates the commission's intervention to guarantee his safety." Al-Zayyat has sent a letter to the Croatian ambassador in Cairo requesting an explanation for the arrest of the Islamic Group's spokesman despite the fact that he did not violate Croatian laws, he had obtained a Croatian entry visa from its embassy in Brussels, and he also entered Croatian territory legally and with official papers.

Later yesterday a spokesman for the "Islamic Information Observer" [al-marsad al-i'lami al-Islami] contacted AL-HAYAH's Cairo office to say that Islamic figures had ascertained that on 14 September Egyptian authorities submitted an official request to the Croatian Government for al-Qasimi's extradition. And that the request was supported by a copy of the death sentence passed against him in absentia by an Egyptian military court in December 1992 in the case of the "returnees from Afghanistan."

The spokesman said that the Croatian authorities had prevented these figures from meeting or making any contact with al-Qasimi, "alleging" that he had left the country for an unknown destination 18 September. The spokesman asked: "If the Croatian authorities deported him, why was he not deported to the place from which he had arrived, namely Amsterdam?" He added: "It seems that we are dealing with cases similar to the disappearances of Imam Musa al- Sadr and Mansur al-Kikhya. But the Islamists will not accept that these deals be repeated or that Shaykh al-Qasimi will be their victim."

He said the Croatian Government "is acting conspiratorially inasmuch as it replied to the inquiry of the Danish Government, which granted political asylum to Shaykh al-Qasimi in 1992, with a memorandum in which it stressed that it had not arrested him and that he had left the country. Thus it is not expected to return to agreeing to release him because that would make it appear as a liar before the international community. The Croats are likely to be seeking to make gains at the Muslims' expense."

The spokesman pointed out that the Islamic Information Observer is a body set up to "support Muslims everywhere." He denied that the observer has in recent days issued statements bearing the name of the Islamic Group. He said: "When the group wants to say something, it issues statements bearing its own signature." He also denied that Tal'at Fu'ad Qasim had managed to enter Bosnia, saying that the Croats "are lying. If he managed to enter Bosnia, why did he not make any contact with any of the brothers there, abroad." He warned that any state which hands over any Islamists to the Egyptian Government "will be punished severely."

Libya

Al-Fazzani Views Palestinian Issue, Lockerbie

NC2509221295 Cairo MENA in Arabic
2030 GMT 25 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Cairo, 25 Sep (MENA)—Jum'ah al-Fazzani, secretary of the General People's Committee for Unity in the Socialist People's Libyan Arab Jamahiriyah, has stated that a solution has been reached on the crisis of the deportation of Palestinians from Libya during his meeting in Cairo with Muhammad Subayh, the Palestinian permanent delegate to the Arab League. But he refused to reveal the nature of the solution.

In an interview to be published in the 26 September issue of AL- AHRAM, al-Fazzani says Libya's view is that all Palestinians living abroad must quickly return to their homeland, Palestine. He explained that the return of over 5 million Palestinians to their homeland from abroad and their assembly on the border will help the Palestinian negotiator and will comprise a kind of pressure on Israel to quickly allow them entry. He noted that pressure to keep them abroad is not in the interest of the Palestinian issue.

Al-Fazzani said that most of the 30,000 Palestinians living in Libya have agreed to return. Therefore, we ask all Arab countries hosting Palestinians to take this measure to put pressure on Israel to allow them in their homeland and end their diaspora.

On the mass deportation of foreign workers, al-Fazzani said it is designed to reorganize the foreign workers and is being done in agreement with their governments. He explained that foreign workers are divided into two categories. The first category includes workers who have legal residence and have contracts with the public sector. The second category includes illegal workers, who are the cause of the problem, all the more so because with the continuation of the embargo on Libya, the investment projects have decreased and the need for large numbers of workers has decreased accordingly. However, the need for skilled labor still remains. Libya is looking for skilled labor to maintain existing projects and cultivate new land.

Al-Fazzani said the real problem is the presence of over one million infiltrators, most of them from African countries. Their presence without work has resulted in several types of crime and diseases alien to Libya. This has necessitated finding a solution to this problem by reorganizing the labor force, especially as some of them lie about their nationality. For instance, some claim they are Ethiopians when they are in fact Sudanese and vice versa. Therefore, Libya is reorganizing the foreign labor force and not eliminating it.

Al-Fazzani stressed that the Egyptian labor force is basically organized and therefore the majority of it will not be affected by the reorganization process. He noted that the Egyptian workers enjoy the same rights enjoyed by the Libyan workers in view of the distinguished relations between the two peoples. He said that during his stay in Egypt he discussed with Foreign Minister 'Amr Musa and Information Minister Safwat al-Sharif all bilateral issues, proceeding from the constant coordination between the two fraternal countries.

On the latest developments in the Libyan-Western crisis and the meeting the foreign ministers of the seven-member Arab committee will hold in New York on the sidelines of the UN General Assembly meetings, al-Fazzani said Libya has submitted several initiatives on a solution to this crisis and has agreed on the venue of the trial. Libya supports the Arab League suggestion that the trial be held at the International Court of Justice in The Hague. Nevertheless, all indications point to Libya's innocence of the accusations against it in the Lockerbie incident. The director of the French intelligence service recently said the Jamahiriyah is not involved in the Lockerbie issue.

Al-Fazzani stressed that Libya is worried about the continuation of the embargo imposed on it and calls on the world public to act quickly to put an end to this tragedy.

On Libya's stand on Israel and its participation in the Barcelona conference despite Israel's participation there, al-Fazzani said this is a different situation because the Barcelona conference will deal with the relationship between the Mediterranean countries and making the Mediterranean a sea of peace. Our stance on Israel and normalization with it will remain the same. He said: We are surprised that a meeting will be held in Amman where the disarmament group will discuss regional security in the Middle East. A number of Arab countries and Israel will discuss security and military issues at this meeting.

Official Meets Egyptian, Iraqi Envoys in New York

LD2509233195 Tripoli Libyan Television Network in Arabic 1930 GMT 25 Sep 95

[FBIS Translated Text] The brother secretary of the General People's Committee for Foreign Liaison and International Cooperation ['Umar al-Muntasir] in New York this evening met 'Amr Musa, foreign minister of the Arab Republic of Egypt. The meeting focused on discussing the fraternal relations between the two brotherly countries and reviewing the agenda of the 50th session of the UN General Assembly.

The brother secretary of the General People's Committee for Foreign Liaison and International Cooperation also met the Iraqi foreign minister, Muhammad Sa'id al-Sahhaf. Relations between the two brotherly countries and issues of mutual concern were discussed during the meeting.

Meets Turkish Counterpart, OAU Chief

LD2609112095 Tripoli JANA in Arabic 1045 GMT 26 Sep 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Tripoli, 26 Sep (JANA) — The brother secretary of the General People's Committee for Foreign Liaison and International Cooperation ['Umar al-Muntasir] held a meeting yesterday evening in New York with Turkish Foreign Minister Erdal Inonu. During the meeting, they discussed bilateral relations between the two countries and means of developing cooperation between Mediterranean states. They also discussed a number of issues of mutual interest.

The brother secretary of the General People's Committee for Foreign Liaison and International Cooperation also had a meeting yesterday evening with Mr. Salim Ahmed Salim, the OAU secretary general. During the meeting, they discussed the situation on the African continent and the proposed agenda for the 50th session of the OAU General Assembly with the aim of coordinating stances between African states.

JANA Editor Criticizes Taba Agreement

LD2509150395 Tripoli Great Jamahiriyah Radio Network in Arabic 1230 GMT 25 Sep 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Syria has strongly attacked the accord which Fatah [Palestine National Liberation Movement] signed with the Israeli enemy in Egypt's Taba and which concerns the so-called second phase of self-rule. Damascus regarded this accord as undermining the Palestinian issue. On the other hand, the Israeli Likud Party declared that it would abrogate this accord as soon as it assumes power. The JANA Arab affairs editor has commented on this capitulating accord, stressing in the beginning of his comment an historic fact which cannot be ignored: The land which this accord refers to used to be totally in the hands of the Arabs prior to 1967, it has never been regarded as being Palestine, and the PLO was established before that date in order to liberate Palestine — that is to say the land which was occupied prior to 1967. [sentence as received] The editor points out that in view of this historic fact this accord is meaningless, except for being a further perpetuation of the Israeli occupation of Palestine and belittling all the sacrifices by the Arabs from 1948 till now. The editor points out that the U.S. President has asked President Husni Mubarak and King Husayn of Jordan to proceed hurriedly to the United States to attend the signing there of the said accord. A U.S. State Department official contacted those meeting in Taba and asked them to close their files and proceed swiftly to the United States to sign the agreement. Abu-'Ammar [Yasir 'Arafat] was elated and agreed immediately, offering every concession possible after having received the U.S. request to sign this capitulating step which Syria regards as undermining the Palestinian issue.

The Fatah organization has signed the so-called second phase of the self-rule authority with the Israeli enemy, thus widening the gap into which the capitulating ones who believed this big lie fell — that it is possible to have peace with the Arab nation's enemies who are perpetuating, with unlimited U.S.-Western support, their occupation of Palestine and practicing various types of murder, torture, and sabotage on Palestinian Arab land at a time when millions of the sons of Palestinian Arab people are living in camps in the diaspora.

The announcement of this step reaffirms the continuation of those who have become involved in the capitulating serial to belittle the great sacrifices made by the sons of the Palestinian Arab people and the Arab nation along the path of liberation and the return, by disregarding the blood of the martyrs who offered their lives for Palestine. The signing of this step comes at a time when the revolutionaries of the generation of Palestinian anger are escalating their confrontation of the soldiers of Israeli occupation, emphasizing the Palestinian Arab people's insistence on rejecting the capitulating serial, and continuing the struggle to liberate Palestine.

Polisario Sends Solidarity Cable to Libya

LD2309161895 Tripoli Great Jamahiriyah Radio Network in Arabic 1230 GMT 23 Sep 95

[FBIS Translated Text] The general people's congress of the Popular Front for the Liberation of Saquia El Hamra and Rio de Oro [Polisario] has expressed its complete solidarity with and gratitude to the great al-Fatih revolution and its leader for their permanent stance of solidarity with the Arab people in Saquia El Hamra and Rio de Oro.

This was stated in a cable which the congress sent at the end of the proceedings of its ninth session recently. The cable said that the Arab people in Saquia El Hamra and Rio de Oro hold every affection and the most sincere noble sentiments toward you because of what you had done as a token of your solidarity and mutual sympathy with your Arab people in Saquia El Hamra and Rio de Oro who are experiencing the ordeal of displacement.

In its cable, the congress stressed its stance of solidarity with the Great Jamahiriyah in confronting the unjust sanctions imposed on it. The cable said that the Arab people in the Western Sahara and Rio de Oro consider themselves to be in one trench alongside the fraternal Libyan Arab people in their confrontation and resistance, and that their hopes in you are great since you are the historic and objective ally of the revolution in Saquia El Hamra and Rio de Oro.

Sudan

Al-Bashir Issues Decree Naming Congress Members

EA2509203895 Khartoum SUNA in English 1713 GMT 25 Sep 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Khartoum, Sep 25 (SUNA) — President of the Republic Gen. 'Umar al-Bashir has issued a republican decree in accordance with the Third Constitutional Decree for 1989, naming the following as members of the National Congress secretariat.

-Awadel-Karim Musa
-Samia Ahmed Mohamed

-Dr. Awadal-Seed al-Karsani
-Abass Ibrahim al-Nour
-Michael Mario
-Abdalla Zakaria
-Prof. Ibrahim Ghandour
-Abdalla Deng Nial

It is to be noted that al-Bashir earlier issued a decree naming al-Shafie Ahmed Mohamed as secretary general of the congress.

Nationals Expelled From Libya Gather on Border

AB2509144795 Paris AFP in English 1336 GMT 25 Sep 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Khartoum, 25 Sep (AFP) — Some 10,000 Sudanese thrown out of Libya have gathered in the Libyan border town of al-Khufra waiting to be allowed back into their country, the head of Sudan's expatriate affairs office said on Monday [25 September]. There have been "problems with the repatriation of Sudanese expelled from Libya and some of them returned by paying their own way," Salih Muhammad Usman told the government daily AL- SUDAN AL-HADITH.

Sudanese Minister of State for Expatriate Affairs Taj al-Din al- Hadi was in Libya to work out the problems, Usman said. For those caught at the border, Khartoum has "distributed questionnaires to organize their transport and will help them in paying border taxes and customs," he said.

Nearly 400 Sudanese arrived at the Hamrat ash Shaykh border post in the west Sudanese province of Kurdufan on September 13. They had made a four-day trek across the desert under 40 degrees Celsius (104 degrees Fahrenheit) heat to reach the border, the paper said.

Six Southern Officers Reportedly Return to Sudan

EA2509200995 Omdurman Sudan Television Network in English 1545 GMT 25 Sep 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Council [as heard] speaker Mr. Muhammad al-Amin Khalifah received today six returning officers from lam Akol's faction [of the Sudan Peoples Liberation Movement, SPLM]. Upper Nile state wali [governor] Musa al-Makhtum and Fashoda commissioner, Abubakr Deng, attended the meeting at the National Council premises.

The returnees expressed conviction of the revolution's efforts in the programs for development and unity. Foreign interference and manipulations have induced them to reconsider, and return to participate in the drive for peace from within. They indicated that others are on their way and will soon join them.

They were pleased with the federal system, maintaining that southern demands has focused on the participation in power for distribution of force and development. They urged those who are still carrying arms to heed the calls for return and the general amnesty. [as heard]

Khalifah said the revolution advocates justice and fair distribution of roles and power-sharing. He spoke about the huge resources available at Fashoda awaiting development to the benefit of the whole Sudan and whole Sudanese people.

Council Condemns Killing of Volunteers in Ethiopia

EA2509215695 Khartoum SUNA in English 1716 GMT 25 Sep 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Khartoum, Sep 25 (SUNA) — The Sudanese Council for Voluntary Agencies (SCOVA) issued Monday [25 September] a statement condemning recent assassination of two Sudanese citizens working at the voluntary relief field in Ethiopia.

The council demanded serious efforts to be exerted by the Ethiopian authorities for investigating in the incident and presenting the criminals before court.

Meanwhile, SCOVA called on the local and foreign voluntary agencies operating in Ethiopia to condemn the assassination of the two Sudanese relief workers and to address the Ethiopian authorities for presenting the killers before trail and protecting the people working at the humanitarian field.

SCOVA also called on the international and regional organizations, UN specialized agencies, the International Council for Voluntary Associations, the International Red Cross committee and human rights organizations to declare their condemnation of the incident of assassinating two Sudanese relief workers in Ethiopia.

The council further called on Sudan Government to follow up closely the process of the investigation in the incident by the Ethiopian authorities.

Bahrain

Authorities Free Main Opposition Leader

NC2509191395 Paris AFP in English
1718 GMT 25 Sep 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Nicosia, Sept 25 (AFP) — The Bahraini authorities on Monday [25 September] freed the country's main Shiite opposition leader, Shaykh 'Abd-al-Amir Jamri, and 40 other political prisoners, his family and opposition sources said.

Shaykh Jamri, arrested in April, was released as part of an agreement between the authorities and the opposition reached in August, Mansur Jamri, the son of the religious dignitary said in a telephone call from London.

The opposition leader, who was jailed after a wave of anti- government unrest, was among the main signatories of a petition calling for the restoration of parliament, which was dissolved in August 1975.

He greeted hundreds of banner-waving supporters carrying portraits of him who gathered to celebrate his release.

"The return of parliamentary life is at the head of our political demands and is still a priority," he told the large crowd, adding that the restoration of parliament would be raised with the government after calm returned.

Shaykh Jamri said the opposition "will work sincerely with the people to guarantee the right climate" for the re-establishment of parliament, under the terms of a deal agreed with the government.

The agreement between the government and opposition envisages talks between the two sides with a view to re-establishing parliament and allowing political exiles to return, the opposition said.

Forty other prisoners, arrested and detained pending trial for their part in the anti-government demonstrations which broke out in Bahrain in December 1994, were freed at the same time, opposition sources said.

Their release took to around 250 the number freed since the accord, which allowed for the gradual release of all detained opposition activists not yet convicted in exchange for a return to political calm, they said.

A further 40 detainees were freed on Sunday while 150 were released on August 16 and another Shiite leader, 'Abd-al-Wahhab Husayn, was let out of jail at the start of September, they said.

The freed prisoners were arrested after being implicated in demonstrations that erupted in Bahrain after the arrest of a Shiite leader, Shaykh 'Ali Salman, who was subsequently deported in January. At least 12 people died in the unrest, which lasted until April.

Kuwait

Army Puts U.S. Abrams Battle Tank Into Service

LD2509124195 Kuwait KUNA in Arabic
0849 GMT 25 Sep 95

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] Kuwait, 25 Sep (KUNA) — The American Abrams (?AB2 AM1 the companion) tank, was put into service this morning within the framework of equipping the Kuwaiti Army with new armament. [passage omitted]

The commander of the land forces Brigadier General Salim al-Surur in a speech praised the efforts made by the committee for arming the armored units which brought about the arming of the Kuwaiti Army with this sophisticated equipment. Al-Surur mentioned that the special operation to rearm the Kuwaiti Army is taking place in joint coordination with the Gulf Cooperation Council member states with the aim of diversifying military armament and so that these operations take place without difficulty. [passage omitted]

Editorial: Politicians Failing Their Constituents

95AE0061A Kuwait AL-QABAS in Arabic 25 Aug 95 p 7

[Article by Bahijah Isma'il Bihbahani: "Our Parliament in Its Last Year"]

[FBIS Translated Text] The Kuwaiti people have experienced democracy in their relations with the rulers who came to power 300 years ago. Modern Kuwait is the product of democracy, which has given everyone the opportunity to work, build, create, and then bequeath the result as a heritage for Kuwait.

Kuwait's progress has always been the result of thousands of thinking minds participating through official and popular institutions—parliament, councils, and the press—in communicating their opinion to officials at all levels.

From the days of Shaykh Sabah bin Jabir bin Salman (1718-76) to our own days, Kuwait's rulers have worked through direct communication and close contact with citizens to create Kuwait's unique and powerful personality, one that never became accustomed to repression or suppression and that possesses the ability to express opinion without fear of punishment or expectation of penalty. The Kuwaiti press is shining proof of the broad freedom that individuals of this country enjoy, with everyone voicing his opinion responsibly, presenting his view, and expressing his concerns. This distinctive freedom in its Kuwaiti form is not available to many in our Arab world.

Now our parliament in its last year has been awaiting a new popular birth, the year 1996, striving hard to make this period a fertile field to highlight its efforts and achievements. For the first time, the members of parliament, who had adjourned on a number of previous occasions for lack of a quorum, were all present in the summer heat to discuss debts. Kuwaitis nevertheless continue to suffer many frustrations and experience many obstacles. For while we citizens value parliament's dedication and appreciate its achievements in the field of public services, we see that the waiting period for obtaining government housing still ranges between 10 and 15 years. (The minister responsible for housing deigns to tell us that "housing is not considered a basic necessity for the Kuwaiti citizen." This is the opinion of a government official objectively charged with carrying out citizens' needs and tending to their affairs.) Some Kuwaiti women, the offspring of this country, are still weeping bitterly, homeless in the world, grieving over separation from the land of their fathers and grandfathers. The foreign wives of Kuwaiti men enjoy full rights of citizenship, while laws and regulations made by men deal a crushing blow to Kuwaiti women and force them to abandon their ancestral affiliation to the soil of this country. Where are justice, equality, and social and mental security if parliament does not attend to this problem and study it from all sides to find a appropriate solution for the female Kuwaiti citizen married to someone of other citizenship?

We look to an increase in Kuwait's population to change the population structure; however, now that some of our daughters have reluctantly given up their black card and others emigrated to European and American countries, it is very clear that Kuwaitis will shortly become a minority in our country.

When we focus closely on the development of education, as embodied in the development of teachers, curriculums, and books—the basic foundations of the educational pyramid—we do nothing but waste time, effort, and money in following up and investigating complaints; and this even though the cabinet is responsible for this task. The cabinet has created a bureau to follow up citizens' complaints and help lighten parliament's burden, so that the latter can devote itself to its basic citizen-serving missions, namely, studying and determining obstacles and working to solve them by changing laws and regulations to suit new developments in the country.

Traveling fellowships for advanced degrees are still like desert rain that falls in an amount that does not quench the thirst of citizens. Has Kuwait become so sated with holders of the masters and doctorate as to assign a single degree for the fellowship in each academic department in educational institutions? Doesn't the future belong to science?—especially when we risk future depletion of oil and money because of the repeated emergence in more than one government agency of "blood suckers" who have sapped our energies and the energies of our coming generations in the most revolting way.

Our history bears witness to how our officials and rulers appreciate and earnestly monitor citizens' circumstances in order to provide services justly. See how angry Shaykh Jabir al-'Aysh became with his son Sabah when the latter, unbeknownst to him, imposed fees on stores in the markets and how he said: "The people of Kuwait have great claims on us. If I had enormous wealth at my disposal, I would satisfy the needs of their poor and needy until their dying day." How does parliament compare with him? Members of parliament, the people's representatives, ought first to apply the laws and regulations to themselves and their family members, so that citizens' hearts can be confident and their minds set at rest. They should not strew their own ways with roses and sweet herbs and cast thorns on the path of citizens, telling them to "tighten their belts"—when they themselves are unwilling to tighten their own belts. "Will you bid others to piety, and forget yourselves while you recite the Book? Do you not understand?" [Koran 2:44].

Some members of parliament have exploited their influence to obtain three prime location lots in a residential area in violation of law and principle, as no drawing was held for them with other residences. How, under what terms and what law, do you grant yourselves this privilege?

Parliament was established in accordance with the desire of all the people to implement a policy of asking "how did you get this?" We have the right as citizens to ask our honorable representatives where they got the right to these houses.

The caliph 'Umar ibn al-Khattab (may God be pleased with him) was a firm administrator. In matters of right, he gave no consideration to the great and did not side with the powerful. He said in one of his letters to his envoys: "In matters of right, treat people alike—those who are close as those who are far, and those who are far as those who are close. Beware of bribes, arbitrary judgment, and meting out punishment in anger."

See how 'Umar (may God be pleased with him) preached before the people, saying: "If I dwell in a spacious home while the people lack, by God that is no dwelling for me—that I may be a pattern for the people."

The members of parliament are bound by religion and the constitution not to use their power as a means to interfere with or curb the rights of citizens.

As for the recent demand by some members of parliament for increased pay, it was the straw that broke the camel's back.

A member of the People's Assembly (the parliament) currently receives an enticing salary. In addition, parliament defrays all sorts of everyday expenses for a member—hotel, restaurant, and telephone bills, first-class travel tickets for a member and his family, and two secretaries to implement his dealings in the area of serving citizens. What need then is there to raise the pay of members of parliament when they in fact draw and enjoy more than they need or require?

We and our coming generations have the right to wonder and ask what enormous exceptional achievements parliament has accomplished to deserve a pay raise. Is it the fact that the people, having evaluated parliament's performance, are making this proposal, not parliament itself? Parliament throughout the past period has been preoccupied with side issues to satisfy certain groups or to curry favor with one group at the expense of others. The attack on faculty members at academic institutions, the subject of the veil, prohibiting smoking, and women's political rights—these were all fundamental points for debate in the assembly's sessions, but the main points relating to public services necessary in the citizen's life were ignored.

With the same voice with which we bestowed our confidence on parliament, we say a loud no to exploiting the remaining money of coming generations to enrich some at everyone's expense. The money is the country's trust. No one has the right to dispose of it in accordance with his individual personal interests. Raise the pay of the teacher who works "25 hours a day" and remains at the bottom of the pyramid in all educational institutions! Make a political decision to change the makeup of Kuwait's population by raising the pay of those who work in the skilled trades!

Make men legally obliged to pay support to their divorced wives and their children, instead of creating a place of exile for divorcees and widows in the Sabah al-Salim area and forcing women to go to the courts and the Palace of Justice to obtain their due. Change current laws and regulations so as to give men and women the same treatment in housing without regard to the nationality of the other party; for all of them are under the aegis of the black card and ought to enjoy its benefits.

By virtue of parliament we are a democratic country, one that requires men of the same caliber who have the strength to demand their right and the right of coming generations and who can stand firm in the face of enticements. Thus do nations arise and countries continue. The weak are never truly dedicated. Kuwait has taught us to bow only to our Creator and always to fight for Kuwait's continuance and survival.

Kuwaitis are not friends of the throne itself; they are the devoted friends of the principles of this throne. Democracy means first examining one's self and requiring it to fulfill its duties toward God and country before granting it its rights or more than it deserves.

"O my people, ask forgiveness of your Lord, then repent to Him, and He will loose heaven in torrents upon you, and He will increase you in strength unto your strength; and turn not your backs as sinners." [Koran 11:52].

—And the pens ran dry and the pages were put away.

Saudi Arabia

Crown Prince Chairs Cabinet Meeting

LD2509201395 Riyadh SPA in Arabic 1557 GMT 25 Sep 95

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] Jeddah, 25 Sep (SPA) — His Royal Highness Prince 'Abdallah Bin-'Abd-al-'Aziz, the crown prince, deputy prime minister, and commander of the National Guard, stressed the need to continue enhancing and expanding the state's goals to serve citizens in all areas of life.

His royal highness said: "Saudi Arabia, led by King Fahd Bin- 'Abd-al-'Aziz, the custodian of the two holy mosques, aims at meeting citizens' needs and working toward the achievement of growth rates that correspond to making employment available for Saudi's, in addition to the improvement of social services such as education and health." [passage omitted]

Prince 'Abdallah Bin 'Abd al-'Aziz chaired the meeting of the Council of Ministers at al-Salam Palace in Jeddah this afternoon.

His Excellency Dr. Fu'ad Bin-'Abd-al-Salam al-Farisi, the information minister said in a statement to SPA after the meeting, that his royal highness called upon Saudi youths, since they are one of the main pivots of Saudi development policy, to benefit from the opportunities made available by the suitable training programs to increase their competence and polish their skills in the various professions.

His royal highness stressed the need to bring together the efforts of all governmental authorities, educational institutions, and the private sector to prepare Saudi youths for work, through concerted efforts, to set the suitable educational and training programs. These are aimed at employing Saudi youths in large numbers. [passage omitted]

The minister of information added: "His Royal Highness Prince 'Abdallah Bin-'Abd-al-'Aziz expressed his total satisfaction with the report that he and the custodian of the two holy mosques received from education and health officials on the increased percentage of Saudi youths joining these two fields, in addition to the regularity of studying in schools, institutes, colleges, and universities from the first day of the new academic year that began last Saturday." [passage omitted]

The crown prince urged the minister of education to exert more efforts for the benefit of the students and to make sure that school books are available for students from the beginning of the academic year out of care for their interest.

The crown prince welcomed Saudi young women's interest in the colleges and institutes that suit their biological and psychological make-up in order to serve the country in areas that agree with their God-given nature.

His excellency added: "The crown prince then reviewed with the council the reports of the important international events, especially in the areas of tension in the world."

His royal highness announced again in this respect Saudi Arabia's intention to continue its efforts that are aimed at achieving peace and stability throughout the world. This peace must be based on the achievement of justice and the legitimate rights of the helpless peoples. His royal highness called upon the international community to perform its duties and responsibilities toward international peace and security.

His excellency Dr. Fu'ad Bin-'Abd-al-Salam al-Farisi concluded his statement by saying that after discussing a number of issues on the agenda the council issued the following resolutions: First, according to the cable of his highness the minister of interior, the council has agreed on the following:

1. To delegate his highness the minister of interior or whoever acts for him to sign the draft agreement between the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia and the Republic of Yemen for security cooperation according to the formula enclosed with this resolution.

2. The Ministry of interior will raise the final signed formula to complete the necessary regulatory procedures between the two countries. [passage omitted]

Al-Sadhan Appointed to Council of Ministers Post

LD2509204495 Riyadh SPA in English
1933 GMT 25 Sep 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Jeddah, Sept 25, SPA — A royal decree was issued here on Monday [25 September] ordering the appointment of 'Abd-al-Rahman Bin-Mohammad Bin-'Abd-Allah al-Sadhan as assistant secretary general of the Council of Ministers at the excellent administrative grade.

Defense Minister Sets Hiring Quotas for Airlines

LD2609092495 Kuwait KUNA in Arabic
0836 GMT 26 Sep 95

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] Riyadh, 26 Sep (KUNA) — Prince Sultan Bin-'Abd-al-'Aziz, the Saudi second deputy prime minister, minister of defense and aviation, and inspector general, has issued an order that the "Saudization of posts" should be applied by airline companies operating in Saudi Arabia, their agents, and travel and air cargo agencies, in accordance with the decision of the Saudi Council of Ministers regarding Saudization of posts in the private sector.

Accordance to what was published in the Saudi paper AL-JAZIRAH today, the decision stipulates that all airline companies, their agents, and travel and air cargo agencies in Saudia Arabia must appoint Saudis to no less than 10 percent of their posts within eight months, "the middle of 1996."

The decision also stipulates that this 10 percent must be increased by 5 percent annually over the following five years, as of the middle of 1996.

The decision called on the airline companies and travel and air cargo agencies to repeat advertisements for vacant posts through all the Saudi media and to accept applications from Saudis with various qualifications wishing to work in the field of air travel and cargo. [passage omitted]

The decision warned that if companies fail to implement this, the Saudi Civil Aviation Headquarters will impose the penalties set out in the decision, including nonrenewal of licenses to the agents of airline, travel, and air cargo companies. [passage omitted]

United Arab Emirates

Foreign Minister Meets With Palestinian Official

JN2509183995 Manama WAKH in Arabic
1430 GMT 25 Sep 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Abu Dhabi, 25 Sep (WAKH)—Shaykh Hamdan Bin-Zayid Al Nuhayyan, minister of state for foreign affairs in the United Arab Emirates [UAE], met in Abu Dhabi today with Faysal al-Husayni, official in charge of the Jerusalem file in the Palestinian National Authority, currently visiting the UAE.

During the meeting, the two officials reviewed the developments of the Palestine question and the situation in the occupied Arab territories, especially in light of the agreement signed yesterday on expanding self-rule in the occupied West Bank.

Yemen

Legislators Boycott Sessions, Protest Arrest

JN2509201595 Amman AL-MAJD in Arabic
25 Sep 95 p 1

[FBIS Translated Text] Half the members of the Yemeni House of Representatives are boycotting its sessions to protest the Yemeni Government's continued detention of Socialist Deputy Muhammad Naji Sa'id. The deputy has been detained for two months.

Sayf Sayil, member of the Political Bureau of the opposition Yemeni Socialist Party [YSP], on a private visit to Amman, said 70 deputies who belong to the YSP, supported by 35 deputies who form an independent bloc in the House of Representatives, are still boycotting the sessions to protest the arrest of prominent Deputy Muhammad Naji Sa'id.

The Yemeni Government arrested Socialist Deputy Muhammad Sa'id, who is a member of the YSP Central Committee, and charged him with killing opponents during the civil war, which claimed the lives of more than 15,000 people from both sides.

Sayf Sayil has demanded that the Yemeni Government release Muhammad Sa'id. He said arresting a member of parliament and a prominent member in the YSP on charges of murder conflicts with the general amnesty issued by Yemeni President 'Ali 'Abdallah Salih in the wake of the civil war.

The Yemeni official hoped that the Yemeni president would personally intervene to secure Sa'id's release.

A Yemeni court in the city of al-Dali' has adjourned several times without issuing a verdict against Muhammad Sa'id. YSP elements fear the step could lead to political tension between the government and the YSP if Muhammad Sa'id is not released.

Taba Agreement Response to 'Zionist Enemy Conditions'

JN2609095095 Baghdad Mother of Battles Radio in Arabic 1730 GMT 25 Sep 95

[Station commentary]

[FBIS Translated Text] An agreement known as the Taba accord was initialed on 24 September on the second phase of Palestinian autonomy in the West Bank and Gaza. Although the contents of the 450-page text of the agreement are not clear, statements and broad headlines make clear that what happened was a response to all of the [words indistinct] and the Zionist enemy conditions.

At the signing ceremony in Taba, Shim'on Peres said the agreement includes a written pledge by the Palestinian Authority to fight what he called terrorism, meaning the Palestinian resistance. Peres asserted that the agreement means that there is no going back to the 4 June 1967 borders, and that Jerusalem is the unified capital of the State of Israel, as he put it. He further said that Israel's borders are the Jordan River, adding that the [passage indistinct]. What then is [words indistinct] and the redeployment of the Zionist forces before the beginning of the election process? There are minute details with maps on which appear the centers and points at which these forces will be deployed and their free movements in any city, village, camp, or any populated areas in order to pursue what Zionism calls saboteurs and terrorists, meaning the heroes of the intifadah and those who fight for the Palestinian people's inalienable rights.

The Zionists wanted Jerusalem. They wanted borders extending to [words indistinct]. They wanted to end the popular intifadah. They always stipulated the condition that the withdrawal would not reach the borders of 4 June 1967. They got all of this and more.

As for the Palestinian people, they obtained only the right to elect a council in the local administration and a promise to release prisoners and detainees. The Zionist diehards, supported by the criminal U.S. tyranny, have been able to reduce the fateful cause of the Arab nation to the size of a microorganism. However, this will last for only a while because the Arab right to Palestine is the claim of the living Arab nation. It was the right of past generations and will continue to be the right of the future generations. Peace can last if it is just; in order for it to be just, everyone must be given his rights. Where is the Arabs' right to Palestine? Where are the rights to Jerusalem, freedom and independence, the return to the homeland, and self-determination? That is the big question.

Referendum Law Amended 'To Ensure Wider Representation'

JN2509113695 Baghdad Iraq Television Network in Arabic 1120 GMT 25 Sep 95

[FBIS Translated Text] The Revolution Command Council has issued a law amending Law No. 13 of 1995, which organizes the public referendum, to ensure a wider representation for the representatives of nationalist and pan-Arab forces in the Higher Commission supervising the referendum.

U.S. Journalists Invited To Attend Referendum

JN2509194695 Baghdad Iraq Television Network in English 1600 GMT 25 Sep 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Iraq's delegation to the UN started sending the official invitations to dozens of American journalists to attend the presidency referendum due to be carried out in Iraq on the 15th of next month.

The invitations, directed by the Ministry of Culture and Information, included pressmen from prominent political papers in America and to main TV network stations, in addition to a number of writers and concerned. [as heard]

Al-Sahhaf on Husayn Kamil, Arab Honor Charter, Kuwait

MM2509121995 London AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT in Arabic 23 Sep 95 pp 1, 4

[Interview with Foreign Minister Muhammad Sa'id al-Sahhaf by Sawsan Abu-Husayn in Cairo; date not given]

[FBIS Translated Text] [Abu-Husayn] What are the circumstances of the case in which former Minister Husayn Kamil is accused of stealing Iraq's money, and how are you handling it?

[Al-Sahhaf] Husayn Kamil's case has been exposed and it is trivial, and the fugitive can only be described as a "traitor" who stole public money. We have referred the entire file, supported by documents, to Interpol to have him extradited as a thief, and we are following up the situation.

[Abu-Husayn] When did that happen?

[Al-Sahhaf] A few days after Husayn Kamil's flight.

[Abu-Husayn] Did Interpol contact Husayn Kamil in Jordan to inform him of the Iraqi accusation?

[Al-Sahhaf] We are following up on the matter.

[Abu-Husayn] What about Iraq's relations with Jordan at present?

[Al-Sahhaf] The relationship with Jordan is staunch and will not be affected by Husayn Kamil's defection there. There are numerous and interlinked interests between us, and we are keen to maintain this relationship.

[Abu-Husayn] But some people banked on what was termed King Husayn of Jordan's "dream" after Husayn Kamil's defection, namely "of restoring the Hashemite caliphate in Baghdad."

[Al-Sahhaf] I have no comment. I look at the reality, and all I can say is that Iraq is keen to maintain the relationship with Jordan and, as I described it, it is staunch. And we are currently considering ways of developing it.

The Jordanian energy minister visited Baghdad recently and it was agreed to supply Jordan with Iraqi oil.

[Abu-Husayn] You were supposed to make a tour, but Husayn Kamil was a direct reason for postponing it. Will you begin it soon, and where will it take you?

[Al-Sahhaf] My tour was not affected by Husayn Kamil's flight at all. The plan was to make the tour before the end of the year and to include a number of Arab and European states. Its aims are: First, to follow up Iraq's bilateral relations with these countries. Second, some of these states are Security Council members, hence there should be continued coordination with them over the Security Council resolutions.

[Abu-Husayn] Is there anything new vis-a-vis relations with Egypt, and what stage has been reached in the dialogue between you?

[Al-Sahhaf] Relations with Egypt have not been interrupted. They may have been affected since the Gulf war. But they are always moving toward improvement, and we are keen to take further steps in this direction.

[Abu-Husayn] What about the mission of the Security Council international inspection team: What are the latest developments as regards the committee entrusted with this matter, and when will its mission be completed?

[Al-Sahhaf] The committee's work is continuing, and we are cooperating with it fully in order to enable it to complete its work as planned. We have supplied it with further information, which is the last information we have, since it was concealed by Husayn Kamil. We discovered the information after his defection. The information would have contributed to solving the problem objectively.

[Abu-Husayn] Does that mean that, had it not been for Husayn Kamil's defection, the committee would not have had access to the new information about the Iraqi germ weapons?

[Al-Sahhaf] We did not know that he had concealed this important information from the inspection team. This information could have contributed to lifting the embargo.

[Abu-Husayn] Some people say that the Iraqi regime's days are numbered. What is the reason for that?

[Al-Sahhaf] It is their days that are numbered. Certainly those people are either tendentious or absurd. The Iraqi people have confidence in President Saddam Husayn and are aware of all that is happening around us. Anyone who talks about that is superficial and knows nothing about the true situation.

[Abu-Husayn] What about the current situation in Iraq?

[Al-Sahhaf] Conditions are stable, but the embargo has an effect, because it is harsh, comprehensive, and inhumane and has created difficult living conditions for our people, including medicine and food shortages and the scarcity of the other commodities our people need. However, the people are cohesive and know who is behind extending the embargo. We are currently working to achieve self-sufficiency in food.

[Abu-Husayn] Do you believe that the Arab reconciliation issue was behind delaying the endorsement of the Arab honor charter for security and cooperation?

[Al-Sahhaf] No, nothing was clear in that direction. There was no objection to Arab reconciliation or to the importance of the Arab honor charter for security and cooperation. There were ideas and discussions which can be summed up in the eagerness to further revise the clauses of the charter of honor and to add further mechanisms so that it can be implemented.

[Abu-Husayn] What are those mechanisms?

[Al-Sahhaf] The charter requires further mechanisms to reinforce the practical aspect of the implementation, away from issuing resolutions, which are normally simply shelved. There was consensus on the necessity to bring about a radical change in the working mechanism of the Arab League and its meetings. As for the Arab Court of Justice, the Maghreb Union states proposed the idea of setting up a mechanism to resolve disputes peacefully, namely a preventive diplomacy organ. The proposal will be adopted. And the Maghreb group promised to submit further ideas and details in this connection. Egyptian Foreign Minister 'Amr Musa proposed the formation of a committee to add the clauses concerning the Tunisian proposal. So the two issues (the charter and the court) were postponed for positive reasons. And the Iraqi delegation said that it was important for the charter to be endorsed through an Arab summit, because it is a contractual charter among the Arab states to regulate inter-Arab relations and mature working mechanisms so that these relations can be governed in a good manner.

[Abu-Husayn] Which states espoused that proposal?

[Al-Sahhaf] Syria, Iraq, Libya, and Kuwait. Because they believe that the charter of honor requires first an Arab summit and also time for study, namely until the next session of the Arab League Council.

[Abu-Husayn] Will the issue be postponed until a summit is convened, given that it is not clear whether a summit will be held?

[Al-Sahhaf] Discussions will be held at ministerial level — this is an Egyptian proposal — until a summit is held. And we hope that a summit will be held.

[Abu-Husayn] But the convening of an Arab summit depends first on Arab reconciliation and a new atmosphere, and there is no sign of that yet.

[Al-Sahhaf] Summits are held to solve problems. They are not formal meetings. They should be serious about tackling all outstanding problems and issues. So far there are fundamental and pressing issues that require more than one summit meeting or emergency Arab League session in order to resolve all disputes on the Arab scene.

[Abu-Husayn] But Kuwait is linking the reconciliation and the summit with two issues: the POW's and reparations, and the Iraqi regime's downfall.

[Al-Sahhaf] We are talking about an Arab summit, not the United Nations. That is incomprehensible.

[Abu-Husayn] First, we are talking about Iraq, and we do not allow anyone to say the Iraqi regime. Second, we are talking about an Arab summit, not a position adopted by a state.

[Abu-Husayn] But how does Iraq deal with the Kuwaiti view?

[Al-Sahhaf] I am talking about all Arab states without saying this or that country. Anyone who wants to improve his conditions and take part in joint Arab action must think of the importance of convening a summit, not use excuses that are incomprehensible. Because that means pursuing a policy of obstructing solutions to the problems.

[Abu-Husayn] What is the Iraqi position on the Gulf Cooperation Council foreign ministers' statement on the importance of proving Iraqi good intentions?

[Al-Sahhaf] For our part, we assure our brothers in the Gulf and elsewhere that Iraq has on several occasions announced its willingness to respond to every positive step taken by the other party with two positive steps.

Red Cross Hosts Meeting on Kuwaiti POW Issue

*LD2609100895 Kuwait KUNA in Arabic
0855 GMT 26 Sep 95*

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] Kuwait, 26 Sep (KUNA) — The sixth meeting of the technical committee of the tripartite committee charged with examining the issue of Kuwaiti POW's and detainees began today on the Iraqi side of the demilitarized zone under the auspices of the International Committee of the Red Cross [ICRC].

The meeting, which is to be held in the Umm Qasr area at the headquarters of the international peacekeeping forces "UNIKOM" over two days, is to be attended by representatives from Kuwait, Iraq, and the alliance states who liberated Kuwait from Iraqi forces. [passage omitted]

Du'ayj al-Anazi, general director of the national committee for the affairs of Kuwaiti POW's and detainees, said in a statement published by the local daily AL-WATAN today that the meeting on the Kuwaiti borders will discuss the questions raised by Kuwait and representatives of the alliance states about the fate of more than 600 Kuwaiti POW's and nationals of other states on whose release Iraq is still procrastinating more than five years after the cease- fire in the war to liberate Kuwait. [passage omitted]

'Great Iraqi Factory' Produces Industrial Machines

*JN2409200295 Baghdad INA in Arabic
1535 GMT 24 Sep 95*

[FBIS Translated Text] Baghdad, 24 Sep (INA)—The Great Iraqi Factory has for the first time begun to manufacture special programmed industrial machines, equipment, and spare parts for other industrial installations, relying on national expertise and locally available raw materials.

Engineer Qasim Muhammad 'Abd, director general of the Great Iraqi Factory Installation, a unit of the Military Industrialization Organization, said that technicians started to manufacture a programmed lathe, Jihad-1, to be used in the typical production of tractor engines for the State Enterprise for Mechanical Industries.

He said that Jihad-1 is one of the most up-to-date lathes in the world and with high productivity. He added he hopes it will be completed within two months. He said four more similar machines will be produced, noting that an imported machine of this kind costs about $930,000.

He explained that since 30 April 1995, the six factories affiliated with the installation have produced thousands of equipment and spare parts for other industrial installations

Engineer 'Abd indicated that the mechanical operation, painting, welding, cutting, aluminum molding, and precision foundry factories have begun production of heavy industrial machines and engine cylinders at their available capacities.

TV Dismisses Allegations in James Baker's Memoirs

JN2509204895 Baghdad Iraq Television Network in Arabic 1900 GMT 24 Sep 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Former U.S. Secretary of State James Baker has alleged in his diplomatic memoirs that President Saddam Husayn sent a secret message to Iranian President 'Ali Akbar Hashemi-Rafsanjani on the eve of invasion of Kuwait in 1990 in which he explained his plan to invade Saudi Arabia after invading Kuwait.

In extracts to be published by NEWSWEEK on Monday from his book "Diplomatic Policies," which will be released later, James Baker said the message he found after the war shows President Saddam Husayn's intentions to send his army to Saudi Arabia. Based on the message, Baker also alleged that President Saddam Husayn explained his intentions to live in peace with Iran along our 840-kilometer coastline. According to Baker, this means new Iraqi borders that begin from Iraq until the United Arab Emirates, including the Saudi coasts on the Persian Gulf.

James Baker disclosed that through his contacts with the Soviet leaders at that time, he received the support of then-Foreign Minister Eduard Shevardnadze regarding the imposition of international sanctions against Iraq. He recently discovered that Shevardnadze had acted unilaterally without the consent of President Mikhail Gorbachev. When Baker visited Moscow during the efforts to forge the alliance for the war, his request for continued Soviet support was met with a cool reaction by the Soviets. Gorbachev told him: We are in need of assistance; can you provide us with some money from Saudi Arabia? Afterward, Saudi Arabia pledged $4 billion.

An official responsible source told the IRAQI NEWS AGENCY that James Baker's allegations are baseless, and challenged him to show a copy of that message.

The source said the talk about 840 kilometer-long coastline is based on false press circles that worked to incite Saudi Arabia against Iraq, such as the case when they spoke about the Kuwaiti tanks that got stuck in sands near the Kuwaiti border with Saudi Arabia while fleeing to the Kingdom. At that time, false information was leaked to the Saudi Government saying that these tanks were Iraqi tanks headed toward Saudi Arabia to invade it. This was one of the allegations on whose basis U.S. forces were invited to defend Saudi Arabia in face of an alleged Iraqi offensive.

Embargo Said Affecting Children's Education

JN2509183795 Baghdad THE BAGHDAD OBSERVER in English 17 Sept 95 p 2

[Report by Hassan A. Hafidh]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Baghdad, Sept. 16 — More than five million Iraqi students on Saturday [16 September] went to schools amid large shortages of school textbooks, stationery, and other requirements.

The five million Iraqi students who started a new academic year have to cope with great shortages of school seats and decent school conditions as a result of the five-year old trade sanctions on Iraq.

The lack of money because of the stop of oil revenues as the UN implements an embargo on Iraqi oil exports, has led to bad schooling conditions.

Iraqi schools now suffer from shortages of students' seats, decent class conditions and most schools are left without minimum maintenance.

This is apart from the lack of school visual aids which most schools do not have them at all.

The government has failed to meet all school requirements as a result of lack of finance.

Textbooks are in great shortage because of the lack of papers and printing materials which Iraq is prohibited from importing from abroad.

Great shortages of stationery such as pencils, schools notebooks and other requirements have been registered. Iraqi education authorities have stressed that the UN sanctions committee has rejected many Iraqi requests to buy stationery from Pakistan.

Moreover, the Iraqi Education Ministry is going to distribute used textbooks to its students this year as it had done so last year. Education officials say this year the shortage in school textbooks even worse than in previous years.

Therefore, Iraqi students have to buy notebooks and other stationery from the commercial markets at high prices. The price of a small notebook is 350 Iraqi dinars while the price of a pencil is 50 ID [Iraqi dinars]. Most families cannot afford to send their students to schools. Although, schooling in Iraq is free of charge but still parents have to buy notebooks, pencils and other school requirements for their children. The average salary of a civil servant is four thousand Iraqi dinars which is only enough to buy three kilos of sugar. [passage indistinct] schools have been deteriorating year after year as a result of the lack of maintenance. Official figures say more than 60,000 Iraqi students will not find seats to sit on this year. They have to sit on the ground of classes which lack the minimum life conditions. According to the same figures more than 7,000 Iraqi schools need maintenance.

There is also large shortage of school teachers because many teachers have left schools and start their own businesses to cope withsoaring prices of foodstuffs and commodities as result of the continuation of the trade sanctions. They also leave schools because of the soaring prices of transportation. According to Education Ministry figures some 2000 school teachers left their schools last year.

As a result of deteriorating school conditions and soaring prices of stationery, the number of school drop-outs has increased dramatically.

According to the Minister of Education Hikmat al-Bazaz, school drop-outs during the academic year 1994-1995 reached 150,000 which is 3 per cent of the whole number of students in Iraqi primary and secondary schools.

As result of the deteriorating school conditions, the percentage of students failing to achieve school exams has risen.

The government has taken many steps to improve schools in Iraq but the lack of money as a result of the embargo has impeded most of the Education Ministry's plans. The Ministry embarked on a big campaign to maintain schools in Iraq and the campaign is continuing. The Ministry also tried hard through international organisations to press on governments to allow Iraq import papers, printing materials and stationery but its efforts have failed.

SAIRI Leader Receives PUK's Talabani

JN2509202595 (Clandestine) Voice of Rebellious Iraq in Arabic 1215 GMT 25 Sep 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Ayatollah Muhammad Baqir al-Hakim, chairman of the Supreme Assembly of the Islamic Revolution in Iraq [SAIRI], has received Jalal Talabani, leader of the Patriotic Union of Kurdistan [PUK], and the delegation accompanying him in his office in Tehran.

Our sources say that the two sides discussed the latest developments in Iraq, and the serious deterioration of the situation at the hands of despot Saddam and his defeated regime.

During the meeting, which lasted some 90 minutes, the two sides also reviewed the activities of the Iraqi opposition and how to escalate jihad.

Several SAIRI officials and the director of the PUK office in Syria attended the meeting.

SAIRI: More Officers Flee two Iraqi Kurdistan

LD2509212995 Kuwait KUNA in Arabic 1900 GMT 25 Sep 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Tehran, 25 Sep (KUNA) — The Supreme Assembly of the Islamic Revolution in Iraq [SAIRI] has said that a group of senior Iraqi army officers, including a major general, two colonels, and a major, had arrived in Iraqi Kurdistan in the latest breakaway of the military from the Iraqi regime.

In a statement released here, the SAIRI said that those officers had declared their rejection of Saddam's regime and expressed their wish to work with the opposition. The statement did not mention the breakaway officers' names.

The statement went on to say that a staff colonel named Yusuf Khalaf al-Khufaji, who commanded the Second Battalion of the 116th Brigade, had also fled to the opposition in Kurdistan.

Government Spokesman Interviewed on Peace Accord

MS2609102595 London BBC Television Network in English 2130 GMT 25 Sep 95

[Interview with government spokesman Uri Dromi, in Jerusalem, by Jeremy Paxman, in London; from the "Newsnight" broadcast — live]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] [Paxman] Well we're joined now from Jerusalem by Uri Dromi, the Israeli government spokesman. What's your bet Mr Dromi, do you think this is the basis of a future Palestinian state?

[Dromi] Definitely. We shouldn't be talking about a Palestinian state at this point. We have time to deal with the final status issues starting in May 96, and until then I think we should be focusing on the quite difficult task that is implementing the agreement we have just reached.

[Paxman] Now what are the chances, do you think, of the agreement holding, given that extremists on both sides are so opposed to it?

[Dromi] I think there's a good chance that this agreement will succeed, and by the way I oppose putting both enemies of... opponents of the peace process in the same category. After all the opponents on the Israeli side are protesting in an amicable way, while the Hizbollah is launching [word indistinct] and the Hamas is blowing up buses in the midst of Israel.

[Paxman] Nonetheless there is opposition from both sides?

[Dromi] There is opposition. Most of the opposition in Israel is legitimate one, this is a democracy, there are some — a few extremists who will be in due course put in place.

[Paxman] The fundamental problem is going to turn, is it not, upon the question of the settlers and the settlements. In your judgment is any long term peace agreement feasible as long as the settlers remain in place?

[Dromi] This is something to be discussed in the next stage, but again you know putting the settlers as people who have nothing to do in those areas is not so correct. This is after all the cradle of our Jewish history, and this only highlights our willingness to go into compromises. I think all these issues should be left to final stages and I'm sure with a lot of goodwill on both sides and the understanding that a good compromise is one that leaves both sides equally dissatisfied is a stable one.

[Paxman] One that leaves both sides equally dissatisfied did you say?

[Dromi] Yes. I meant that. Both sides I think in signing this agreement understand that one has to put aside the big dream and really adjust oneself to the reality, and this is what both sides are doing and of course there are minorities on both sides that oppose it. By the way we are talking a lot about the enemies of peace, opponents of peace, we should also say a good word about the silent majority on both sides who are not maybe rioting in the street, in joy or celebration but who are understanding that this is the only viable alternative and they on both sides support it.

[Paxman] But both of course of the architects of the agreement face imminent election don't they?

[Dromi] Well this might be interpreted as good news, and not only as bad news. I think 'Arafat when he goes into elections it will help legitimize the Palestinian authority and Mr Rabin also goes to election but knowing him I don't think he leads this process thinking all the time about the election clock ticking. He has long range goals and he is working to achieve them regardless of elections.

Water Agreement With Palestinians Praised

TA2209121695 Tel Aviv HA'ARETZ in Hebrew 22 Sep 95 p B1

[Commentary by Ze'ev Schiff: "Reciprocity in the Water Agreement"]

[FBIS Translated Text] While Hebron remains a thorn in the flesh of the Israeli and Palestinian negotiators, the negotiating sides surprised many people by reaching an agreement on a sensitive issue that is more important than the question of Hebron, namely, water. Even though the agreement is valid for the interim period only and much remains open for the final agreement, it should be considered as a sign of things to come.

It must be said for the Palestinians that this time they steered away from slogans and from flaunting achievements for prestige's sake and showed a pragmatic attitude. This made things easier, but the negotiations were nevertheless exhausting with both sides' manifesting sensitivity to every word. The Palestinians want to have larger quantities of water and full control over — or at least equal partnership in — the water resources in their territory. Israel is very sensitive about the water resources it has developed over dozens of years. Its supreme objective, beyond continuing to use existing water supplies, is to prevent reckless water drilling in the West Bank and the contamination of the water sources.

The agreement constitutes an achievement for both sides and opens the door to cooperation in a spirit of goodwill. The Israeli delegation was headed by Noah Kinarti, the defense minister's aide, David Shatner, Professor Uri Shamir of the Technion, Daniyel Reisner from the military advocate general's office, and Water Commissioner Gid'on Tzur. The details of the agreement have still not been made public. Its headline refers to water and sewage, but most attention was devoted to water with only marginal treatment being accorded to the issue of sewage and drainage systems.

What are the main achievements for the Palestinians? This agreement makes the first attempt to translate into practical terms what has been termed as "the Palestinians' water rights in the West Bank." The issue of rights will be discussed during the final negotiations, but the present agreement does refer to it. According to Article 6, for example, the sides agree that the Palestinians' future water needs in the West Bank are estimated at 70 to 80 million cubic meters a year. At present the Palestinians use approximately 31 million cubic meters a year.

Another achievement lies in the additional quantities of drinking water that the Palestinians will receive during the interim period. They will receive 28.6 million annually, in addition to the 31 million cubic meters they currently use. Part of this water will come from inside Israel. Hebron, for example, will receive 1 million cubic meters a year; Ramallah will receive half a million, and Nabulus will also receive 1 million. Israel will drill a well that will supply Janin with 1.4 million cubic meters, and the Gaza Strip will receive 5 million cubic meters annually from Israel. The Palestinians will cover the full costs of the required pipelines. In the distant future the water for the Gaza Strip is likely to come from desalinated sea water paid in full by the Palestinians themselves. The Palestinians will also be allowed to drill, at their own cost, another well in Nabulus and to pump 17 million cubic meters from the eastern aquifer for the use of Hebron, Bethlehem, and Ramallah.

The first sign of Palestinian independence in the water sphere is Israel's willingness to involve them at this stage in joint management of water and sewage issues and to give them a supervisory role in the West Bank. This supervision is contingent on consensus — namely, that no side be able to implement measures changing the status quo without the permission of the other side.

This is an achievement for the Palestinians, but also for Israel. It is true that it has taken on a partner, but this partner has undertaken to act responsibly in accordance with the agreement in preserving the water resources and preventing their contamination. When the completed interim agreement is signed, a joint water committee will be established the agenda of which will also be decided jointly. There will also be joint management and supervision of water resources and sewage. The Palestinian Authority will manage its own water affairs, and the system will serve the Palestinians alone. It should be noted that the agreement stipulates joint management only in the West Bank. The Gaza Strip, except for the Qatif Bloc wells, will be managed solely by the Palestinians.

At least five joint supervision teams will operate in the West Bank. Each side will enforce the agreement in its sphere, including the private sector. Only the joint water committee will be permitted to license new drills or to approve the increase of water use from any resource. The same holds true for reducing its use as a result of drought or hydrological changes. Israel insisted on inserting a clause stating that in the case of violations stemming from sabotage or the illegal use of water, the sides would undertake to make reparations.

The Palestinians also gained an incidental achievement. This agreement with all its clauses will institute in the Palestinian entity a progressive Western approach according to which the owner of the land is not the owner of the water found under his land. This approach stipulates that the water belongs to the nation. The national authorities are responsible for supervising the water and granting drilling licenses, and must guarantee its quality and prevent its contamination.

In this agreement Israel on the whole managed to preserve its interests, especially in the western water aquifer. To the Palestinians this agreement will provide a feeling of responsibility and a sense of new partnership with Israel. This responsibility has to be expressed, among other ways, in developing new water resources rather than merely waiting for others to do the job. The agreement failed to achieve, however, a separate water system for the settlements and their disengagement from the eastern aquifer, which is earmarked for the sole use of the Palestinians. On the other hand, the Palestinians will receive more water from Israel. These mutual achievements have been written down on paper, and now it only remains to be seen how they will be implemented. This will determine our behavior in the final agreement.

Prominent Hamas Activists Detained in West Bank

TA2409100795 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 0800 GMT 24 Sep 95

[FBIS Translated Text] The security forces have taken Shaykh Jamal Abu-Hayja and Bassam Abu-Shamla, both from the Janin District, into custody under a four-month administrative detention. Our correspondent Yoni Ben-Menahem reports that the two men are known as prominent Hamas [Islamic Resistance Movement] activists in northern West Bank.

'Grave View' Taken of 27 Sep PA Rally in Hebron

TA2409100295 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 0800 GMT 24 Sep 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Security elements are taking a very grave view of the Palestinian Information Bureau organizing a rally of solidarity with Hebron residents on 27 September. The rally will include a procession from the center of the Hebron casbah, and will end with a mass prayer at the Cave of the Patriarchs. It is supposed to include all the school students of Hebron, Palestinian Authority [PA] officials, notables from the territories, and Israeli Arabs.

Our correspondent Yoni Ben-Menahem reports that a manifesto signed by the representatives of every Hebron public institution and Hebron municipality, which has been disseminated in Hebron, speaks against any agreement that may be signed between the PA and Israel without consultation with Hebron representatives.

Shahaq on PA, Iraq, Lebanon, Syria, POW's

TA2409133895 Tel Aviv DAVAR (ROSH HASHANAH supplement) in Hebrew 24 Sep 95 pp 4, 5, 6

[Interview with Lieutenant General Amnon Shahaq, chief of IDF General Staff, by Ron Ben-Yishay and On Levi; place and date not given]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] [DAVAR] What principles will provide security for the Jewish settlers and the Palestinians in Hebron when the IDF [Israel Defense Forces] redeploys as part of the interim arrangement?

[Shahaq] The Palestinian and the Israeli security forces will not operate in the same areas. This holds for Hebron, as well as for all of Judaea and Samaria. The Palestinian Police will be present, but not where there is a permanent Israeli presence, including the roads Israelis travel each day to and from settlements. I do not see the Palestinian Police operating in Israeli settlements or industrial zones under Israel's control.

[DAVAR] Will each settlement and industrial zone be provided with a road leading to it under Israel's exclusive control?

[Shahaq] Certainly. We will have a security responsibility throughout the area dubbed as C on the maps, including the roads. We have joint Israeli-Palestinian patrols of common roads in Jericho and Gaza. The same will happen in Judaea and Samaria. An Israeli who decides to take a road where he knows the Palestinian Authority [PA], not the IDF, is in charge of security, should know there will be no IDF soldiers there; Israelis will not have to travel on such roads. At the same time, I expect the Palestinian Police to assist Israelis who encounter problems in those areas.

[DAVAR] Can an agreement be made concerning Hebron that would provide Israelis with the appropriate security?

[Shahaq] There is no agreement on Hebron at this stage. In any event, security arrangements in Hebron will be different than in any other West Bank town. We will have to find a formula that will meet the needs of Israelis living in Hebron.

[DAVAR] What lessons have you learned from the Gaza-Jericho agreement and implemented in the new agreement?

[Shahaq] The first lesson is that the agreement's adaptability to the reality on the ground is far more important than it being perfectly worded. Agreements can be immaculately worded, but impossible to implement. To be more specific, we believe we have to insist on two principles: One is that our freedom of operation and security responsibility wherever it applies be undisturbed by anyone else. The other principle is that we must insist that the PA prevent terrorist activity against Israel from within its territory — regardless of difficulties it has or chooses to present domestically. The PA must be determined, not in talk but in action.

[DAVAR] What is your impression of PA activity in Gaza and Jericho?

[Shahaq] There is room for improvement. I am not saying they have done nothing. I will even state clearly that the PA has prevented attacks and arrested terrorists, but there are aspects of frustration in which they should do much better.

[DAVAR] Can we gain the extradition of fugitives?

[Shahaq] I believe that the PA cannot allow people who carry out terror attacks to roam freely in areas under its control.

[DAVAR] And what if they hold trials and put them in some luxury prison for several years and thus do their part?

[Shahaq] If they try them casually for several years, this is not the intention of the agreement and we should not accept this. I expect them to fight and effectively and practically punish anyone who engages in terror activity. According to the agreement, they do not have to extradite anyone who has engaged in terrorism, was tried by the PA, and sent to jail. But, we may demand that he be turned over to us as soon as he is released from jail, and we will. If a person was sentenced to seven years in prison and serves his sentence, we will demand that he be extradited to us as soon as he is released. I am quiet if he is behind bars and not on the streets, planning the next attack. It is important to note that I mean real prison — the way we see it, nothing less. People cannot walk in and out of prisons at will.

[Tel Aviv HATZOFE in Hebrew on 24 September carries an similar interview with Gen. Shahaq by Beni Shuqrun on page 6, held on 22 September. Shahaq is asked about the "fear that from now on, we may see numerous safe havens for murderers, in addition to Jericho." He says: "We have a clear agreement with clearly worded clauses that must be respected. Anyone who reads the agreement will soon find that they have not met it on this issue. It is clear to me that if the reality turns out to be as you described it — where murdering terrorists find several safe havens in Judaea and Samaria — it will not last long."]

[DAVAR] Why did the negotiations with Syria stop?

[Shahaq] I will not analyze Syrian motives, but one thing must be clear: It was not Israel that decided to stop the negotiations and the scheduled meetings; it was Syria. We had understandings with the Syrians and the Americans about the order of meetings in the negotiations. Israel met the understandings, but the Syrians suddenly decided that they are not comfortable with them. The Syrians want assurances on substantive issues before the negotiations are held — well, this is impossible. After all, all that is happening now is pre-negotiation feelers. If they allow themselves to retract agreements during the process that precedes the substantive negotiations, what will happen later, when we get to the main issues?

[DAVAR] What was attained in your meetings with Gen. al- Shihabi, your Syrian counterpart?

[Shahaq] The purpose of the Washington meeting was to attain a better understanding of the parties' stands. Each side indeed explained the main points of its security concepts. Later, we tried to address the details of the security arrangements, with each side explaining why it needs them and what they are to provide. We did not discuss concrete issues and there was no need for maps. The discussion was general. The Syrians presented the main points of their security concept, and we asked them questions. One of the questions I asked, for example, was why should 80 percent of the Syrian Army be concentrated near the border with Israel after an agreement is signed. They asked about matters that concern them.

[DAVAR] Did you speak about Lebanon in the discussion about security concepts?

[Shahaq] We told them that we view Lebanon as a part of the overall agreement with them. They said that Syria considers Lebanon to be a separate problem, and that we should be negotiating with Lebanon, not with them. I told them that as long as the Syrian Army is present in Lebanon, we have to address the issue of Lebanon in relation to the negotiations with Syria. The Syrian presence in Lebanon has a clear impact on Israel's security, as does their treatment of activities by Hizballah and Palestinian organizations in Lebanon. We told them that we are not happy with the fact that Syria hosts the headquarters of Palestinian rejectionist organizations, allowing them to operate from Syrian territory.

[DAVAR] Has the war in South Lebanon changed in the last year?

[Shahaq] It has not changed; the IDF is the same and the terrorists are the same. The number of attacks by the terrorists against us has increased from last year; but, over the past couple of months, our activity has intensified in several areas in Lebanon. We are looking for the terrorists in places they never thought we would. I am happy to say that we find them too. In the past several weeks, at least 20 terrorists were killed. We are constantly trying to improve our fighting methods, but so do they — they analyze their successes and failures and change the nature of their activities. This fact forces us to study, change our routine, and get constant intelligence information.

[DAVAR] Did the traffic accident of Shaykh Subhi al-Tufayli, the former Hizballah secretary general and one of its most extreme members, have anything to do with the new fighting methods?

[Shahaq] I do not know exactly what happened to al-Tufayli. I do not regret it, but I am sorry to say we had nothing to do with it. Nevertheless, we will continue seeking out and hurting Hizballah leaders wherever we find them because they want to murder us. I very much hope that Hizballah realizes that wherever they pull the rope more than we are willing to bear, they will pay a heavy price. The IDF soldiers in Lebanon are doing a great job. They feel that they are doing an important thing, and they know that they are doing it well, just as Hizballah does.

[DAVAR] You were head of the Intelligence Branch during the Gulf War. What new information did you learn from the senior Iraqi defector Kamil Hasan?

[Shahaq] We must treat the information Kamil Hasan provides very carefully. We should remember that he was in charge of Iraqi arms procurement, including nonconventional weapons; that after the war, he was in charge of deceiving the UN inspectors. Therefore, we must slowly and carefully examine whatever he says. We are reexamining the information we had during the war, comparing it with what we know today. The Intelligence Branch is working on this in order to provide us with lessons to learn. I believe we will not be surprised when the work is finished. It appears that we had very good information about what was happening in Iraq and, perhaps even more than having solid information, we had a good appreciation of its real ability.

[DAVAR] The UN inspectors said that Iraq had a certain biological warfare capability during the Gulf War. At the end of the war, a missile landed in Israel with a warhead different from everything we had known: It was full of concrete and metal, and we can assume that it was a primitive model of a biological warhead.

[Shahaq] It is possible. I cannot be certain, but I believe that no one builds a warhead made of concrete just for fun. Concrete could contain several things, including biological matter.

[DAVAR] Is Iran making progress in its attempts to attain a nuclear capability?

[Shahaq] Iran does not have such a capability yet, but it keeps trying to get one. We must make sure that the international community does not allow this to happen. This is an international, more than an Israeli interest. Some countries are closer to Iran than we are.

[DAVAR] Some two months ago, when you went to the site of the bombed bus in Ramat Gan, someone called you a traitor. What did it do to you?

[Shahaq] I was upset and saddened.

[DAVAR] Has the status of the chief of staff eroded?

[Shahaq] The fact is that no one has ever called the chief of staff a traitor before. Clearly, last year we saw IDF personnel come under attacks that we have never seen before. I am not talking about attacks against the chief of staff or Central Command Commander Ilan Biran; I am talking about soldiers doing their job in the field. I am very glad that many resent the harsh remarks made against people in uniform. The fact is, however, that they were made, and they had never been made before. We should think about this. [passage omitted]

[DAVAR] It took you a long time before you reacted to the killings of Egyptian POW's in the Sinai.

[Shahaq] We are not a reaction agency. We held a debate among the General Staff, and decided to condemn the incidents you have mentioned and to launch a propaganda campaign in the IDF to remind everyone of the policy, the orders, and the manner in which the IDF treats POW's. The IDF should be talking inwardly on such issues, not externally. As for the issue itself, the IDF has not had a problem with POW treatment for many years. The best proof is that there has not been a single incident of improper treatment of POW's in Lebanon. Soldiers serving in the army today are clear on how to treat POW's. [passage omitted]

Shahaq on Iranian, Syrian, Hizballah Threats

TA2509102995 Tel Aviv MA'ARIV (ROSH HASHANAH supplement) in Hebrew 24 Sep 95 pp 24, 25, 26

[Interview with Lieutenant General Amnon Shahaq, chief of IDF General Staff, by Ya'aqov Erez and Avihay Becker; place and date not given]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] [MA'ARIV] The hijacked Iranian plane affair has again brought up the issue of the Iranian threat. What is your assessment of this threat in view of the Iranian procurement of nuclear weapons?

[Shahaq] The security aspect is more worrying than the political aspects. I believe there is some similarity — although not exactly the same — between Iraq of the late 1980's and Iran of the late 1990's. Because of their neighbors' air superiority, both countries share the problem of covering long distances. I believe that Iran is not just Israel's problem; it is a problem for our neighbors. The Iranians feel that they cannot easily fly their aircraft into the neighboring countries. At the moment, it does not matter whether they have chemical, biological, or nuclear weapons — the less threatening warheads are very bad as well.

Many countries have had nuclear weapons for years without threatening world peace. This shows you the difference between normal countries and Iran and Iraq. In countries where the regime is democratic, responsible, and rational, you know that if they ever used this type of weapon, it would be under circumstances any rational person could imagine and anticipate. I believe that Iran and Iraq have a unique rationale. Hence, a dangerous regime that thinks differently might just use such capabilities, and that constitutes a threat of a totally different nature.

[MA'ARIV] Do they have missiles that can reach Israel?

[Shahaq] They want to have them, and are making an effort, but these things are not cheap. The Iranians insist on making an effort to obtain surface-to-surface missiles. The only explanation for insisting on missiles with such a range can only be the State of Israel. They can reach almost any place else with other, cheaper missiles.

[MA'ARIV] How do we deal with this threat in practical terms?

[Shahaq] The army is keeping its eyes open, looking as far ahead as it can, preparing for anything that might develop or any threat than might come up, and trying to find answers.

[MA'ARIV] Is this the main threat to Israel's existence?

[Shahaq] No. Iran does not have this capability today, so they presently pose no threat to Israel's existence. At the same time, Iran is not just threatening Israel; primarily, they pose a threat to countries closer to them than Israel. The threat there is far more immediate. I believe the problem is really a global one, not just an Israeli problem. We have seen the effect far beyond the immediate circles. Such weapons in the hands of extreme and fanatic Muslims could effect many countries.

[MA'ARIV] Yes, but we care about ourselves first.

[Shahaq] Certainly we keep ourselves in mind first. We have to take care of and protect ourselves first; no one is arguing that. Iran is still far away, which is also an advantage.

[MA'ARIV] Yes, but is it not coming closer through Hizballah?

[Shahaq] Hizballah is pro-Iran, but it is not a threat to Israel's existence, nor is Iran at this time. The correct view is that Iran may find it very hard to attain such capabilities without the help of other countries — including democratic countries — which is why this is not just our problem. I believe that if the world realized — and the Iraq example makes understanding easier — the danger of such developments, we would have seen a process that would make it very difficult for Iran to turn its nuclear capability into a weapon.

[MA'ARIV] Is there any news concerning Ron Arad?

[Shahaq] I do not want to discuss this issue. We have information, the scope of which makes no difference. There is no half-way here. We cannot have a partial success on this issue.

[MA'ARIV] A partial success at this stage could be some sign of life.

[Shahaq] It is not enough. We want to know who is holding him and where, otherwise it is no good. So far, no one has assumed responsibility.

[MA'ARIV] Nothing has changed?

[Shahaq] The fact is that no practical negotiations for his release are being held at this time.

[MA'ARIV] Hizballah is getting its equipment from Iran and with Iran's assistance; its men train in Iran and travel on the al- Biqa'-Damascus road. Are the Syrians trying to control the passages, narrow them down, or supervise them?

[Shahaq] In the distant and recent past, we have seen Iran applying serious pressure on Syria to allow Hizballah do all kinds of things. I cannot say today that Syria is trying to restrict Hizballah activities. It happens on occasion, but for a very limited period, and when it is in the interest of Syria.

[MA'ARIV] As was the case when you met your Syrian counterpart?

[Shahaq] Not just then. There were periods when suddenly, as if by magic, there were no Hizballah attacks. Anyone may have his explanation for this. I, for one, believe the Syrians were involved. At the same time, soon after this, they would jump right back to the level of activity. I do not believe that the Syrians actually tell Hizballah to attack this or that target and they do it, but Syria certainly can influence Hizballah — there is no doubt about it. Had the Syrians wanted to do something, Hizballah would be operating under much tougher constraints, making its ability to act much more difficult.

[MA'ARIV] Did you bring up the issue of Hizballah in your conversations with the Syrian chief of staff?

[Shahaq] Yes.

[MA'ARIV] How did he react?

[Shahaq] He did not. The assertion made was that Hizballah is a Lebanese affair.

[MA'ARIV] We seem to have been employing a new tactic in the north recently, especially since 'Amiram Levin has become Northern Command commander.

[Shahaq] I do not believe we are doing things we have not done before, though we do constantly try to improve, introduce new means, additional combat techniques, and better intelligence. As a rule, we are constantly trying to improve our ability to fight Hizballah. I can say, however, that recently we have managed to inflict many more casualties on Hizballah than before.

A war is being waged in south Lebanon. We must remember this. Despite everything I have said so far, there has been a very significant rise in the amount of Hizballah activity. This is a war which, from Hizballah's point of view, is a guerrilla war. The majority of their attacks are shooting from a distant cover. You do not have to be very brave for this kind of attack. You take a Sagger launcher with a range of 3 km, place it some two-three km from the target — often in areas we do not patrol — fire three or four rockets, and leave. The whole incident lasts no more than 5 to 10 minutes. Sometimes they are smarter and fire from two or three locations at the same time. This is the majority of the time.

The recent incidents were roadside charges or ambushes, the majority of which this year were aimed at the SLA [South Lebanese Army], not the IDF [Israel Defense Forces]. Obviously, Hizballah is making a great effort to be sophisticated about it, which makes war against them complex. We study all the time, but so do they. Yes, I do believe that over the past several months, we have been successful in operations that combined good thinking, wise planning, and very good performance, coupled with intelligence that has helped us pinpoint Hizballah locations.

[MA'ARIV] Could the next stage be them firing katyushas at our settlements without any Israeli provocation or mistake?

[Shahaq] They have done this before. Certainly they might get up in the morning and decide to fire several katyushas. Why? Just because. I, however, believe they realize that such things work both ways. They must realize that they will pay a heavy price.

[MA'ARIV] In a deadlocked situation with the Syrians, can that border heat up?

[Shahaq] Theoretically, of course it can. And yet, borders do not just heat up by themselves. We must remember that the situation has been deadlocked for more than 20 years, even before we were talking to Syria, and the border did not warm up. This has been our quietest border, without even terrorist infiltrations.

As a policy, Syria has always tried to use other fronts to deliver its messages to Israel. I believe that Syria is well aware of the balance of power, as well as the price of unrest. The Syrian Golan Heights on the other side of the current border is becoming more and more populated. There are hundreds of thousands of Syrian residents there. I do not believe Syria has an interest in warming up the border at this time but, in the end, this is a decision that a handful of people make in Syria, and I am not one of them. [passage omitted]

[Tel Aviv YEDI'OT AHARONOT in Hebrew on 24 September on pages 5, 6, and 39 carries a report on interview with Gen. Shahaq by Yaron London, held on 21 September in Shahaq's office. London asks: "What will the next war look like, God forbid?" Shahaq says: "A lot of firing. The enemy planes will not reach Israel's rear area, but they will have an ability to strike the rear with missiles. The front will be packed with tanks, artillery, and antiaircraft missiles — at least in the first stage. There will be less moving and running battles than in previous wars. Naturally, every theater will be different."

["How near is the threat?" London asks, and Shahaq replies: "There does not seem to be an imminent threat, but none of our previous wars was anticipated a year in advance."]

EYAL Members Discuss Group's Aims, Operations

TA2309160695

[FBIS Editorial Report] Jerusalem Israel Television Channel 1 Network in Hebrew at 1800 GMT on 22 September relays a video report by Eytan Oren who visited Hebron "this past week" and filed a report on the situation there. Oren says that tension between local Arabs and the Jewish settlers is mounting and that the security forces, in order to prevent potential friction, escort Qiryat Arab Jews on their way to the Cave of the Patriarchs and prohibit the hoisting of PLO flags in sensitive areas, such as around Bet Hadassah and Tall al-Rumaythah, in the heart of Hebron.

Focusing on the right-wing EYAL [National Jewish Organization] group, Oren reports that it has "sworn to torpedo the agreement that is about to be signed" between Israel and the Palestinians and "to use all means to fight the Rabin government to the bitter end." At an initiation ceremony held on Mount Herzl in Jerusalem, a new member of the group takes an oath pledging to fight "against the wicked government and its allies, the most ruthless enemy the Jewish nation has ever faced, to the very last drop of blood." Speaking to the reporter, the new member says he is willing both to die and to kill "anyone he is told to kill, whether he be a terrorist or simply an Arab." The man adds that he is prepared to kill Jews, too, because "there are Jews who are not Jews, and anybody can understand who they are." Asked about their operational plans, another group member says they are prepared to carry out "an armed attack on Orient House, in the name of self-defense." With regard to Hebron, he says: "If IDF [Israel Defense Forces] soldiers come to evacuate us, we will fight them. Hebron and Eretz Yisra'el are more important than any Jewish blood." He adds that someone in Qiryat Arba' is training dogs to attack Arabs and that they will be set loose in the city after the IDF withdraws. Another EYAL member says that the group carries out provocative patrols in the city "with the intention of clashing with the Arabs," adding that these patrols help allay the anxieties of the Jews.

Jerusalem Channel 2 Television Network in Hebrew at 1800 GMT on 22 September reports that "Knesset Member Ya'el Dayan of Labor asked the attorney general to instruct the police to interrogate EYAL members for having stated today that they will murder Jews if necessary. Dayan is demanding that the EYAL members be detained, interrogated, and tried for incitement and racism."

Knesset Chairman Reports Ross Remarks on Syria

TA2409094695 Tel Aviv HA'ARETZ in Hebrew 24 Sep 95 p A1

[Report by political correspondent Aluf Ben]

[FBIS Translated Text] Syrian President Hafiz al-Asad wants to achieve a peace arrangement prior to the November 1996 Knesset elections. This is the view of Dennis Ross, the U.S. peace process coordinator, who met with Labor Knesset Member Ori Or, chairman of the Knesset Foreign Affairs and Defense Committee, in Washington several days ago.

Ross told him that the Israeli-Syrian process has not ended, and if al-Asad makes up his mind to be "bolder," an arrangement will be achievable next year.

U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher will meet with Syrian Foreign Minister Faruq al-Shar' at the UN General Assembly in New York at the end of this week to discuss the resumption of the peace talks. Christopher and President Clinton will meet with Prime Minister Yitzhaq Rabin and Foreign Minister Shim'on Peres on the day the interim agreement is signed in Washington. Later Christopher is expected to make another visit to Jerusalem and Damascus in an attempt to renew the talks, which were discontinued about three months ago.

Ross told Or that al-Asad is afraid that if he fails to make an agreement with the Rabin government, there will be no agreement in his lifetime. Ross added that al-Asad, who was the defense minister during the Six-Day War, feels personally responsible for recovering the Golan Heights for Syria. He feels he alone can do it, and he does not want to bequeath this "national debt" to his son. The U.S. coordinator believes the Syrian president wants peace, but does not know how to go about it, and therefore wants the United States to do it for him. He believes al-Asad is "vulnerable" and fears the results of the Israeli elections, and would therefore like to achieve an arrangement prior to the elections.

Ross further said that in al-Asad's view, Rabin is a man who will honor his commitments. Al-Asad's attitude toward Rabin is a mixture of respect and apprehension.

He fears that Israel is seeking to isolate Syria and extort concessions from it, that it intends to negotiate without paying the painful price prior to the elections. In Ross' view, al-Asad will agree to an arrangement only after he is convinced it is the best agreement Syria can achieve. In addition, he needs to prove to the Arab world that he got more than his predecessors from Israel: more than Egyptian President Anwar al-Sadat, PLO Chairman Yasir 'Arafat, or Jordan's King Husayn.

The U.S. coordinator told Or that al-Shar' had asked him whether Israel realizes that al-Asad could co-opt the entire Arab world in the peace process. Ross told al-Asad and al-Shar' that Syria should appeal to Israeli public opinion. Al-Asad replied that every leader should attend to his own people, and that the peace arrangement will include security arrangements acceptable to both countries' publics.

According to Ross, Syrian personnel appointments have recently changed. As a result, officials with a Western orientation and economic expertise were promoted. It is believed in the United States that al-Asad is acting with long-range objectives in view, and that he is trying to emulate the "Chinese model" of economic development without expanding the democracy, of going about it slowly and cautiously lest the control be lost.

Referring to the encounter between Chiefs of Staff Amnon Shahaq and Hikmat al-Shihabi at the end of June, which resulted in an impasse, Ross said the two men projected pragmatism, but al-Asad, who thought the dispatch of al-Shihabi was a meaningful step that would prompt Israel to repay with a concession, was disappointed by the Israeli stand. Ross said al-Shihabi's importance in the upper Syrian echelons exceeds that of al-Shar'.

He believed that two reports published following the chiefs of staff encounter embarrassed al-Asad: the revelation of the Syrian proposal for asymmetrical demilitarization on both sides of the border at the ratio of 10:6, which was publicized in Israel; and the Radio Damascus commentator's report that Syria was willing to accept international warning stations on the Golan (the Syrians denied the report and the commentator was fired).

Ross believes the solution to the security talks lies in a combination of substance and procedure with the consent of both sides. In his opinion, an agreement will take time, and there is therefore no need to hurry. The Americans intend to pursue low- profile action and will consider their next moves with caution.

Ministry Aids Jordan in Containing Oil Spill

TA2509075195 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 0700 GMT 25 Sep 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Efforts were made last night to contain an oil spill in the Jordanian port of al-'Aqabah. Israeli experts took part in the project. Our correspondent Shulamit Schmerling reports that this was the first time that Israel and Jordan have cooperated to prevent marine contamination in the Gulf of Elat. Dozens of tons of oil have been pumped out of the Red Sea so far, and work is still in progress.

Last night, the al-'Aqabah Port Authority asked the Israeli Environment Ministry for help in their struggle to prevent the spread of a nearly 30 metric ton diesel oil spill. The port director asked Minister Yosi Sarid for help, and the minister instructed personnel from the Station for the Prevention of Sea Contamination in Elat to place all their equipment and know-how at the disposal of the al-'Aqabah Port Authority. This morning, the al-'Aqabah Port director expressed his gratitude and appreciation for the Israeli aid.

'Russian Mafia' Real Estate Purchases Reported

TA2409072895 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 0505 GMT 24 Sep 95

[Report by Shim'on Vilna'i]

[FBIS Translated Text] The Russian Mafia is branching out of the Dan District. Criminal elements from the CIS have recently invested dozens of millions of dollars in assets in the Sharon and Coastal Plain districts. I have learned that their shopping spree included four large real estate items on one street in Caesarea. The asking price for each of the sprawling houses was $3 million. Businessmen in expensive cars came to view the properties and announced that they intended to purchase all four houses and the adjoining plots. The buyers paid $4.5 million for each of the assets — 33 percent more than the asking price.

The new police unit that investigates the doings of the Russian Mafia — or as the police call it, the International Crime Division — has received information that the new owners are linked to the Russian Mafia. Police Intelligence officials believe that criminal elements from the CIS have so far purchased assets worth hundreds of millions of dollars in Israel.

Crown Prince Hasan, 'Arafat on Taba Accord, Ties

JN2509182695 Amman Jordan Television Network in Arabic 1712 GMT 25 Sep 95

[Interview with Crown Prince Hasan and Yasir 'Arafat, chairman of the PLO Executive Committee and president of the Palestinian Authority, by Jordan Television correspondents Kassab Samawi and Murid Hammad and PETRA/JORDANIAN NEWS AGENCY director 'Abdallah al-'Utum, in Amman on 25 September—recorded]

[FBIS Translated Text] [al-'Utum] Sir, Your Royal Highness Crown Prince Hasan, the regent; Sir, Yasir 'Arafat, chairman of the Palestinian National Authority: It pleases us to welcome you in this television interview, which reflects the rendezvous between Jordan and Palestine, the rendezvous of brotherhood and twinning, which is always based on goodness and righteousness.

[Hasan] Permit me to begin by welcoming President 'Arafat, and to express to Abu-'Ammar [Yasir 'Arafat] on behalf of everyone here our great happiness and pleasure at the opportunity to meet with him for these brief hours, particularly since he has recently put up with a great deal of hardship on behalf of us all. He has worked late into the night. Permit me to express, on behalf of his majesty the king, and on behalf of all in Jordan our unmistakable desire to let him know that we will constantly remain, God willing, remain an asset and a support for all that the Palestinian brothers will undertake in order to provide the components of pride, immunity, and dignity for people on their national soil. Sir, you are most welcome.

['Arafat] Your Highness, may God bless you. I am happy with this good and blessed meeting, which we are sharing here, particularly in these critical circumstances. I would like to express the sentiments embedded within my heart and bosom, and also to extend my great thanks to his majesty the king and to your highness for all that you have extended to your brothers in the tough circumstances they are experiencing, including the enormous efforts his majesty the king and you have made on our behalf in the past and at present, and for your future efforts to help us address these tough negotiations with the Israelis.

[Al-'Utum] Sir, with the initialing of the agreement on the second phase of the Declaration of Principles on self-rule by the Palestinian National Authority yesterday, a new era, with new set of responsibilities has been ushered in. How do you view the future of the Palestinians against the backdrop of the signing of this agreement?

['Arafat] First, I would like to say that the agreement was signed between the PLO and the Israeli Government. The Palestinian National Authority is part of the PLO. Nonetheless, the agreement was signed by the PLO. Undoubtedly, the agreement should have been signed three months after the signing of the Cairo agreement last year. However, 14 months of constant delays have been experienced. If his royal highness would permit me, I would like to speak with a measure of frankness on this issue. At one time, the Israelis told us that there were no sacred dates [preceding three words in English]. At other times, they said that we did not have the necessary funds. Consequently, they would not be able to transfer powers to us. This prompted me to attend a donor nations' conference in Brussels and to tell the conferees about this. I asked them to pay us the promised donations, citing the Israeli argument that they would not implement the agreement because we were experiencing a budget deficit. Then, they raised the issue of the so-called violence and the recent operations. Let me say something in this regard before everyone, in all frankness. Some of these operations were carried out in coordination between the extremists on both sides of the divide. We have documents to corroborate our assertion. This is not the appropriate time to talk about them. Nonetheless, we have these documents. We also have confessions made by several people regarding the Bet Lid operation. I raised the issue of the Bet Lid operation before his majesty the king, President Mubarak, and Rabin at the Cairo meeting.

I told him: Some of your elements were involved in the Bet Lid operation. So, why are you blaming me? I then proposed that a Jordanian-Egyptian- Israeli-Palestinian committee be formed to look into what I had said, and to see if I was telling the truth and if our investigations were right or wrong. But he objected to it. Therefore, his majesty the king and President Mubarak said: Abu-'Ammar, we do not want to take part in that committee, but you and [Rabin] can form a joint committee. The proposed joint committee to enquire into that issue, however, was not formed. But I presented documents to him in front of His Majesty King Husayn and His Excellency President Mubarak. I say this because extremists here and there are seeking to destroy the peace process. I am sorry to say this, but I am obliged to tell everyone the truth. I do not say this haphazardly. I am speaking in light of the documents I have. Let us say once again that we are facing difficulties in implementing what we had agreed on, and we will also face similar difficulties in implementing what we have just agreed upon. Nothing, however, is taken for granted. There are difficulties. One should exert efforts regardless of success. This is the greater jihad. When the Messenger [the Prophet Muhammad] was asked about the greater jihad, he said: The jihad against one's desires, and this is the greater jihad. He also said after he returned from one of his famous battles: We returned from the minor jihad to the greater jihad. When he was asked what the greater jihad was, he said: The jihad against one's desires. It is building the state and building the society.

[Samawi] Your Highness the Prince, let us go back a ways to your first meeting at the White House in Washington in 1993 with President Clinton and with Israeli Foreign Minister Peres. You said that the aim of that occasion was not to take photographs, but to reach a just and comprehensive peace in the region and remove the differences among the region's peoples. In light of what was recently signed in Taba and what has been signed throughout the peace process, are we moving toward a comprehensive and just peace in the region?

[Hasan] I believe it is useful to recall that the said meeting came as a result of a Palestinian initiative in Oslo, and it took place during the donor countries' meeting. The world countries came to see the possibility of developing and rehabilitating the region's economy. By this I mean the human contents. We thank President 'Arafat for reminding us that international commitment to the peace process should be strengthened. I hope that during the signing ceremony at the White House we will see a renewed commitment to the comprehensive concept of security cooperation, because today's security is not one of weapons and equipment but basically one of a feeling that there is a change in people's lives. The withdrawal from a number of cities and villages and the happiness of liberation should be supported by a lot of confidence that the future will be much better than the past. This is what makes us launch bilateral coordination, especially after a period of rest for our Palestinian negotiators, God help them. We hope they will give us some valuable time before the Amman economic summit, so that we can seize this opportunity to address the world on man's needs and the Jordanian and Palestinian peoples' ability to change the bitter reality to a better future with God's help if this opportunity and this support were granted us.

['Arafat] Especially, Your Highness the Prince, since this conference to be held under the new world order is very important, not only to one or two countries, but also to the region and its strategic ties with the rest of the world. Therefore, you have a great responsibility, Your Highness the Crown Prince.

[Hasan] We will build this order together, God willing, as appropriate, and in a manner that serves our objectives on the Arab, Jordanian, Palestinian, and international levels. We have great hope that, under the care of Abu-'Ammar, God willing, and his team, we will further focus on what we have called coordination. Abu-'Ammar speaks about the relationship of twins, and a twinning relationship. Both expressions are accepted, however, we are, in fact, looking for the twinning aspect of the relationship....

['Arafat, interrupting] Twin, God willing.

[Hasan] May God bless you.

[Hammad] Your Highness, Mr. President, allow me to change the language of dialogue to ask you in English:

[Hammad, in English] This is a two-sided question: one is to President 'Arafat about the significance of the agreement that you've just initialed with the Israeli Government, and to your royal highness: What is Jordan's position vis-a-vis that agreement, and how do you feel about that?

['Arafat, in English] I would like to remind you that in the beginning, many of the oppositionists, and we respect our opposition—we are a democratic field, and we respect all the other sides' points of view—they had mentioned, if you remember, many times, Gaza first and last—but now, no. It is a continuity of the peace process. And when we went to Madrid, as you know, we had not been accepted—even Palestinians alone. We were with our brothers in one delegation, and through this, we had the opportunity to participate in Madrid conference, because they did not accept us to go alone. This was a very important support from our brothers here in Jordan to give us this chance to participate in Madrid with this joint Palestinian-Jordanian delegation. It was not easy from the beginning, because we had mentioned from the beginning, or they had decided in the beginning, according to President Bush's initiative, that our solution as Palestinians will be in stages, not one stage. We are now in the second stage. So, still, we have a lot to do. For this, we are looking to our brothers, especially to our twin, to support us. We are in need of their help, and of all other Arabs' help, because at the same time, we have to remember that to have a lasting peaceful solution in the area, not only with the Jordanians and the Palestinians and Egyptians, but also we have to remember our brothers, the Syrians, and our brothers, the Lebanese. We hope that they will have the same opportunity to push forward the tracks on the two lines.

[Hasan, in English] I would like to thank President 'Arafat for referring to the facilitating role that Jordan, with his majesty's guidance, was able to perform in the context of the then Jordanian- Palestinian joint negotiating team. Of course, the focus on the Oslo accord, the focus on the Jordanian-Israeli peace agreement, has meant that we are in the context of comprehensive peace, negotiating at more than one speed. And I would echo what President 'Arafat mentioned in terms of the hope for comprehensive peace to include Syria and Lebanon.

As far as the achievements of the last several weeks of very hard in-depth negotiation, I want to make it very clear that we are, of course, living a transitional phase, all of us in the region, and particularly our brethren the Palestinians, who have suffered so much over years of occupation. And I think that our energies need to be redoubled in terms of coordination and in terms of focus in terms of the years ahead on realizing a truly comprehensive and just settlement. It is a process. It is an evolving process. It is a dynamic process. It is very much a process which is alive in the hearts and minds of millions of people. And I think this dynamism owes so much to the leadership and the perseverance of the person of our distinguished guest today.

[Samawi] Your Royal Highness, the world and the area peoples are viewing the Amman economic summit as a turning point in the building of the age of peace and the economy of peace. How does His Highness Crown Prince Hasan view this summit?

[Hasan] Regarding the summit, first, it is not a Jordanian summit. It is hosted by Jordan. It is an honor to us that the world economic blocs will meet in Jordan. Like his excellency the president said, I hope that the summit will be another boosting step for rehabilitating the region's economies on the basis of social solidarity, equality, and justice. Interest in major projects, naturally, is a continuation of the Casablanca summit. However, when we talk about the participation of people in this part of the world in forming new structures of stability, I believe that it is an opportunity to address the world through projects and the establishment of new financial tools and institutions. All this is unprecedented in the history of our region. We greatly hope that maximum benefit will be made of this opportunity in the interest of the Arab people everywhere and in the interest of the peoples of the region.

['Arafat] If you would allow me, Your Highness the Prince.

[Hasan] Please, go ahead.

['Arafat] In fact, we should not waste the opportunity of the Amman meeting. Why? I would like to speak frankly. We are facing a new world order. His highness the prince called it the new feudal order. My old friend, the late Rajiv Gandhi, called it the new order to order [preceding four words in English]. Regardless of names, when did this new order come into existence? It came into existence after the defeat of the Soviet Union. This country was and still is the largest military nuclear power.

Up to this minute, the maintenance [preceding word in English] of these stockpiles has remained a problem to the whole world. Should the world fail to address this problem, a world catastrophe would ensue. Your highness, correct me if I am wrong. However, this giant was defeated. Why did this take place? It was defeated on the political level. We must be aware of this. This is a new feudal order, just as his highness said. I remember remarks made to this effect by our friend the late Rajiv Gandhi. He said: New order to order. So, we must realize that our future battles will be tough economic duels. Can we really address them, or can we not? Or shall we be docile tools in these battles used to the others' advantage? This is the challenge posed to us. It follows from this that the responsibility of his majesty the king, his highness the prince, and our twin Jordanian brothers is great. It goes without saying that we must take part in shouldering this responsibility to render this conference a success, and to emerge from it with useful formulas to the advantage of the peoples of this region. Otherwise, we will sustain a great loss.

[Samawi] The question is to both his excellency the president and his highness the crown prince: Jordanian-Palestinian coordination regarding the peace process on both the Jordanian and Palestinian tracks of negotiations is a fact that cannot be overlooked. This coordination started in Madrid under the Jordanian umbrella, and continued until the conclusion of the Oslo accord, the Jordanian-Israeli peace treaty, and the Taba agreement yesterday. As a matter of fact, at one point in the course of the Palestinian- Israeli negotiations, the Jordanian role was kept invisible, particularly in the media. President Abu-'Ammar has just told us that he is coming to thank his majesty the king for a key role he played when he telephoned Yitzhaq Rabin over the Hebron issue. As a matter of fact, we want to know more about the Jordanian-Palestinian coordination on the peace process.

['Arafat] Well, I did not disturb his majesty the king only over the Hebron issue. I most often telephoned him, complaining to him about the tough negotiations [laughing]. Our brothers have extended a helping hand. From time to time, I disturbed his majesty the king with my telephone calls. His majesty the king put up with my calls and aided me. May God bless him.

[Hasan] Sir, with regard to the upcoming phase, it is our strong hope that we will focus on coordination over the daily affairs of our relationship; that is, over bridges, trade, etcetera—all of which constitute daily affairs of our relationship. We are also thinking of joint action to formulate a perspective in order to connect the homeland with the world, God willing, and influence the world around us through positive, persistent, and confident moves showing that the Arab individual enjoys dignity on his land.

[Hammad, in English] Mr. 'Arafat, I would like to ask you, after the signing of this agreement with the Israeli Government, what will happen next? And where would Jerusalem fit in in the next stage?

['Arafat, in English] First of all, we had agreed upon that Jerusalem will be in the last stage with other issues, like the refugees, the settlements and the settlers, and the borders. But we have to remind you that they had opened the question of Jerusalem from their side. So, now we have to put in our consideration how they are changing the demographic situation in Jerusalem by all means. This needs a very big effort from the Arab nation, from the Islamic nation, and from the Christians all over the world. I have to remind you also that when I was recently in Italy, I had very important talks with His Holiness the Pope, through which we were speaking about the historical event of the 2,000 years of [the birth of] Jesus Christ. This is not only a Palestinian or Jordanian, or Arab issue, it is an international issue. We have to put it in our consideration. And this is a very important step toward Jerusalem and Bethlehem. But, in the same time, we have to put in our consideration that they are continuing in changing the demographic situation in the holy city. We have to be very careful about it.

[Hammad, in English] So, how do you see the role of Jordan with regards to the final stage, particularly with respect to Jerusalem?

['Arafat, in English] We have to work together with all the Islamic Ummah, with all the Arab nation, with all the Christians and push them to support the rights, not the Israeli rights—our rights—in Jerusalem.

[Hasan, in English] If I may—on the situation of Jerusalem— clearly in terms of the political responsibilities, in terms of the municipal responsibilities, in terms of the civil society which is being created everywhere in the territories and progressively so — we recognize the tremendous achievements that are underway. We hope that this transition will be towards a progressively changing picture ever for the better in terms of Arab identity, Musilm and Christian identity. And in terms of the holy city, the president rightly pointed out, in his discussion with the Holy See, we hope that a landmark event such as the bimillennial celebration of 2,000 years of the birth of Jesus Christ. For, the birth of Christ can be celebrated, that is the appropriate word, at that time in a situation where all can participate, in terms of a sharing of values and in terms of an inter-civilizational dialogue, in terms of an inter-faith dialogue. But, I think the key, in addition, of course, to the territorial responsibilities and the physical responsibilities — which are the responsibilities of the Palestinian negotiator — is that all of us participate, as you rightly pointed out, in the context of the Muslim world, and, indeed, in the context of the Christian world, not least of all the churches of the region. When we speak about a Christian identity, we are talking about Arab identity in developing an understanding of how shared values can contribute to a new quality of life in the holy city.

[Al-'Utum] Is there a message that His Highness Crown Prince Hasan and His Excellency President 'Arafat would like to address to the steadfast kinfolk in the occupied territory at the end of this meeting?

[Hasan] President 'Arafat will leave within minutes to address the brothers in Gaza directly. We wish him every success in continuing this great service and this distinguished work. May God help him as he shoulders these heavy responsibilities under these difficult circumstances. All love and appreciation to our brothers. In the name of his majesty the king, we stress that we are on their side to the best of our ability. This week, I can only say may God help you for the continued work and efforts, which I fully realize to be extremely exhausting for any person. However, we do not live for ourselves, but to serve the generations after us and to achieve noble objectives, God willing.

['Arafat] I must say something important. We are returning to a destroyed homeland. It is a homeland that has been destroyed by the occupation. Its infrastructure has been completely destroyed. Can you imagine that they have removed even the railways and used them? Is this reasonable? When I met with the European foreign ministers, I said: You had occupied countries in Asia, Africa, and Latin America. I visited those countries after you left them and they attained their independence. Those countries' infrastructures were left intact. However, we are returning to a homeland with its entire infrastructure destroyed. We are starting from scratch. This means heavy responsibilities. It is not an easy responsibility. May God help us all. Therefore, I call on all my Arab brothers and all friends in the world to give this fact close consideration. There are problems—from the drinking water in Gaza, to the streets and schools. Schools are operating in three shifts. Is this reasonable? For 28 years of occupation, not one single classroom has been added to the schools. In each classroom, there are more than 65 students. Regarding hospitals, the rate is less than half a bed for every 1,000 citizens. Your highness the prince, you are aware of the figures I am mentioning.

[Hasan] Yes, sir.

['Arafat] The figures are terribly low.

[Hasan] This is completely unfair.

['Arafat] Completely unfair. Not a single bed has been added to any hospital. Many other things can be mentioned. Responsibilities lie ahead. However, there is something very important: the morale of our people and your twin people is high. I want to say that with this morale and with this sincere brotherly support, we will overcome all the difficulties ahead. The dawn is imminent.

[Al-'Utum] His highness the crown prince, the regent, His Excellency President Yasir 'Arafat, chairman of the Palestinian National Authority, on behalf of my colleagues Murid Hammad and Kassab Samawi, thank you.

['Arafat] Through this station, I must salute my brother detainees, whose issue was strongly present in all the negotiations that we held. Thank you.

Paper Gives Politicians' Reactions to Taba Accord

JN2609110795 Amman JORDAN TIMES in English 26 Sep 95 pp 1, 7

[Special to JORDAN TIMES by Natasha Bukhari]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Amman—Jordanian politicians' reactions to the new Israeli-Palestinian agreement on autonomy seem to be identical to those drawn when Oslo I was reached between the two sides, with some politicians welcoming the accord as a new chapter in the march towards establishing an independent Palestinian state and others belittling the landmark agreement to yet another "defeat" for Palestinians.

A marked difference this time around is that Jordan hailed the new deal unreservedly in comparison to its muted reaction to the original Oslo accord which was secretly drawn by Palestinian and Israeli negotiators away from consultations with Jordan which had provided an umbrella for Palestinian negotiators under the Madrid formula.

Unlike Oslo I the news accord between the Palestinians and Israelis was reached after the acknowledged and appreciated intervention of Jordan, which, according to both Palestinian and Jordanian officials, had acted as a mediator between the two sides, helping to unblock the often deadlocked talks at Taba.

The unreserved official welcome of the agreement, however, did not change the nature of attitudes of Jordanian politicians towards the agreement since Oslo, which ranged from the totally optimistic, to the grudgingly accepting to the extremely rejectionist.

His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hasan, after a meeting with Mr. 'Arafat who briefed him on the agreement [Monday 25 September] morning, hailed the deal describing it as "a political achievement and a step to utilise the international perception for rehabilitating the Middle East."

Jordan's peace treaty with Israel, signed in October 1994, has put the Kingdom at ease vis-a-vis the outcome of the Middle East peace process as far as its relations with Israel are concerned, analysts say. Hence, the marked ease with which the leadership has received this latest breakthrough.

His Majesty King Husayn played a key role in smoothing the differences between Israeli Foreign Minister Shim'on Peres and Mr. 'Arafat in their negotiations, and his efforts have been appreciated by Mr. 'Arafat, who made it a point to visit Jordan and announce his gratitude to the Jordanian Monarch and government.

Mr. 'Arafat thanked the King and "everyone in the Jordanian government," for helping him overcome the crises in the difficult negotiations. He said that "the latest intervention came from King Husayn who telephoned Rabin on (the issue of) Hebron, (thus) helping us reach an acceptable solution."

But Jordan's official reaction, which reflects the improvement in Jordanian-Palestinian relations following a period of tension since Oslo, failed to change the traditional stands Jordanian politicians have adopted regarding the interim deal.

Mainstream politicians, toeing the official line, hailed the agreement, which one of them described as "the beginning of the end to the Israeli occupation of the West Bank."

This optimistic view was, however, countered by a more cautious stand reminding the optimists of the limitations imposed by the agreement without ruling out the possibility of a "more promising picture of the situation as is," in the words of one well-placed politician.

According to this politician, there are three limitations in the way of establishing a fully independent Palestinian state, which he pointed out, were spelled out by Mr. Rabin himself on the eve of initialling the agreement.

These are: Israel's refusal to return to its pre-1967 borders, keeping a "united Jerusalem" under Israeli sovereignty, and retaining parts of the Jordan Valley as well as keeping the Jordan River as its security border between Jordan and Israel.

"I think they mean what they say," said the politician, citing as evidence Israeli measures that contain Palestinians in their "Bundestans," while at the same time "building the infrastructure that links Israeli settlements to one another through roads, highways..."

This "delinking of Palestinians through establishing physical obstructions, making human contact among Palestinians themselves very difficult, is parallel to their measures of strengthening and consolidating their settlements that surround the Palestinian ghettos," he said.

"This 'plan' not only restricts the movement of Palestinians within the West Bank, but also restricts their contact with their neighbours like Jordan," said the politician.

Noting that Israeli elections are approaching, the politicians said that the three conditions Mr. Rabin has spelled out are "part and parcel of the Labour party's election campaign," but that "if one really believes in the dynamism of peace, the agreement definitely builds the momentum of establishing a Palestinian state despite the real physical obstacles on the ground."

Notwithstanding the negative aspects of the accord, some analysts have pointed out that the Palestinians had limited choices but to go ahead with the agreement, especially under the present "difficult circumstances when they are being expelled from Libya, turned away from Lebanon, and receiving close to no support at all from other Arabs," in the words of one seasoned analyst.

"Any progress in the direction of establishing a Palestinian state is something they are looking forward to and will use to the best of their abilities," he said.

What little optimism "moderate" politicians had to offer was, however, countered by the outright rejection of the new agreement, which peace opponents described as "Oslo number two."

"It's not a step forward, it's ten steps back," said lawyer Ibrahim Bakr, adding that it only ensures an Israeli foothold in the West Bank.

"Hebron is no more an Arab town and the Ibrahimi Mosque is no more a mosque... the deal does not secure the Palestinians' water rights nor control over their land," Mr. Bakr said in reflecting Palestinians' rejection of the terms the two sides have reached regarding Hebron, which was a sticking point in their negotiations. [sentence as published]

According to the agreement, which was initialled Sunday [24 September] and will be signed at the White House on Thursday [28 September], Israel will guard Jewish settlers and their movements and maintain overall responsibility for their safety. Redeployment will be completed no later than six months after the signing of the agreement. Israel will also keep control over the Ibrahimi Mosque.

As for water, the accord stipulates that the Palestinian share of water will be increased by 28 million cubic metres. A joint water committee will manage resources and prevent uncontrolled drilling.

"The water resources are under the control of Israelis... the acquifers are under their control...," Mr. Bakr said.

Echoing Mr. Bakr's condemnation of the accord, Islamist Deputy Hamzah Mansur told the Jordan Times that the agreement was "a new disappointment... which kept 70 per cent of Palestinian land under the control of Israel... it also introduced a new phenomenon of keeping settlers and Israeli forces inside Hebron, thus establishing a dangerous precedent that could be followed in other cases like jerusalem or other West Bank cities.

According to the agreement, Israel will withdraw troops from Ramallah, Bethlehem, Nabulus, Tulkarm, Janin and Qalqilyah and redeploy in Hebron, Israeli forces will also pull out of 450 West Bank villages. Israel, however, will retain overall responsibility for external security, Israelis and settlements across the West Bank. The task of "combatting extremism" in those areas lies with Israel.

Mr. Mansur also criticised Israel's policy towards "labelling Palestinian prisoners and classifying them into categories to suit its own purposes," which he said was a policy towards keeping them imprisoned.

According to the agreement, Israel will free Palestinian prisoners in three stages—upon the signing of the accord, on the eve of the elections and once more "according to principles which will be established separately." The "principles" are related to the prisoners' age, their sentences and the time they have served as well as their alleged offences.

Kuwait Requests Time To Settle Normalization Issue

JN2509173995 Amman AL-HADATH in Arabic 27 Sep 95 p 1

[FBIS Translated Text] We can say that the meeting between Shaykh Sabah al-Ahmad, Kuwaiti deputy prime minister and foreign minister, and 'Abd-al-Karim al-Kabariti, Jordanian minister of foreign affairs, in Cairo on the sidelines of the recent meetings of the Arab League Council, was a decisive meeting. The two ministers' frequent [as published] meetings need to produce tangible results with regard to official normalization of relations.

Reliable diplomatic sources told AL-HADATH that at the outset of the meeting Shaykh Sabah al-Ahmad explained to al-Kabariti the nature of the political obstacles to normalization. Al-Sabah noted that Kuwaiti public opinion and a large number of deputies are still undecided on the issue of normalization with Jordan.

For his part, Minister al-Kabariti showed understanding of the reasons given by Shaykh Sabah al-Ahmad. However, he clarified to the Kuwaiti foreign minister the nature of the challenges Jordanian diplomacy faces regarding the Gulf states, particularly Kuwait and Saudi Arabia.

The sources cited al-Kabariti as telling Sabah al-Ahmad that Jordan has done all it can to clarify its position on relations with the Gulf states—a stand that was announced by his majesty the king. Al-Kabariti was also cited as saying that the failure of the meeting to produce tangible and practical results regarding the normalization issue would increase the pressures being exerted on the Jordanian Government and diplomatic corps by many Jordanian elements which remain strongly sympathetic toward Iraq.

According to the same sources, al-Kabariti said that during his talks with Saudi Foreign Minister Prince Sa'ud al-Faysal, he did not notice any hesitation with regard to normalization with Jordan, as was the case during the talks with the Kuwaiti foreign minister.

According to AL-HADATH's information, Shaykh Sabah al-Ahmad asked Minister al-Kabariti to give him two weeks to settle the issue of normalization with Jordan and to examine the Jordanian demands of reopening the Jordanian embassy in Kuwait, resuming flights, and restoring mail service between the two countries.

Anti-Normalization Conference To Be Held

JN2309105695 Amman AL-URDUN in Arabic
23 Sep 95 p 2

["Exclusive" report]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] At last, it has been decided to hold the Jordanian popular conference for safeguarding the homeland and combating normalization at the headquarters of the Jordanian People's Democratic Party-Hashd in Jabal al-Husayn.

According to the Parties Law, the convocation of the conference at the party's headquarters is considered legal and does not need the government's prior permission.

The conference will be organized by 11 parties as well as independent personalities. Thirty-three members representing all parts of Jordan will take part in the conference.

Those representatives have been chosen by 16 gatherings held in the kingdom's governorates and districts.

The draft political report and the code of honor for safeguarding the homeland and combating normalization were distributed among representatives a few days ago for consideration prior to conference deliberations.

At the beginning of the conference, Bahjat Abu-Gharbiyah will deliver a speech on behalf of the preparatory committee. Dr. Hasan Khurays will be the master of ceremonies. [passage omitted]

Panel Approves Amman Regional Security Center

JN2309103995 Amman JORDAN TIMES in English
23 Sep 95 p 1

[Report by Caroline Faraj; "Special to the Jordan Times"]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Amman—Representatives of 20 countries — except Egypt — attending the meetings of the working group on arms control and regional security setup by the multi-lateral phase of the Middle East peace process, on Thursday approved for setting up a regional security centre to be based in Amman.

At the conclusion of the two-day meeting, participants stressed the need for such a centre and called for establishing it before the end of this year.

Egypt was the only country to object to this on the grounds that it was not the right time for establishing such a centre. Egypt's chief delegate was quoted as saying that he was acting upon instructions from his government.

The majority of participants, in addition to the U.S. and Russia, co-sponsors of the peace process — also agreed to the establishment of two sub centres, one in Doha and the other in Tunis, pending the agreement of the Tunisian Government.

Commenting on the decision, Abdallah Tuqan, scientific advisor of His Majesty King Husayn, said the working groups decision would become final after it was endorsed by the special working group on arms control and regional security.

Egypt based its reservation on grounds relating to the timing. The head of the Egyptian delegation said "politically it is not the right time to set up such a centre.

"However, experts responded by saying that the meeting was mainly called to work out a draft charter for the centre in addition to discussing the administrative and financial aspects involved.

One participant said the Egyptian position might have been based on considerations related to the centre's proposed headquarters rather than on the timing. Egypt's called for expanding the centre's objectives to include the establishment of a region free from nuclear arms and arms of massive destruction.

Responding to the Egyptian proposal, experts stressed that the Egyptian proposal falls under the procedures rather than the objectives.

Participants proposed the creation of a board of directors, grouping heads of the delegations who opt to join the centre in addition to representatives of the U.S. and Russia to supervise the centre.

The Egyptian delegation suggested that the centre be directly linked with the special working group, and that this group supervise the centre.

King Husayn Gives Council of Europe Address

JN2509200395 Amman Jordan Television Network in Arabic 1750 GMT 25 Sep 95

[Speech by King Husayn at the Council of Europe in Strasbourg on 25 September—recorded, in English]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Mr. President of the Parliamentary Assembly, Mr. President of the Committee of Ministers, Mr. Secretary General, distinguished members of the Parliamentary Assembly: It is both a privilege and a pleasure to address the parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe. It offers me the occasion to share my thoughts with you on relations between Europe and my country about what they have been in the past and what we hope they will become in the future. I would like to take this opportunity to thank my good friend Miguel Angeles Martinez, president of the Parliamentary Assembly for inviting me to address this distinguished body and for his leadership and contribution to Euro-Mediterranean understanding.

Much has changed in the Middle East. On balance, the changes have been positive, although the consequences of past events are still with us. There are new factors of maturity, realism, determination, and vision, which vital our horizons. It is perhaps too early to assess the impact of Europe on our region in the 20th century. We are still experiencing the consequences of two devastating European wars and the repercussions on our lives. The major consequence of the First World War was a new map of our region drawn up by the victors. The map drew frontiers, where there were none before: established a number of new states; and disrupted patterns of economic, social, and family life, which had formed through four centuries of Ottoman rule.

In our case, the dislocation of our former status took the form of a separation between the two sides of the River Jordan, which geographically and historically formed the holy land. The truncation of the holy land and its political separation from its northern extensions to Lebanon and Syria was carried one step further with the creation of the State of Israel in 1948. Into the former cohesion of our social, economic, and cultural life was introduced a new element. Growing tensions between the incoming settlers and the indigenous population led to war. The mass displacement of the Palestinian people and the festering of political and ideological extremism, which has plagued the entire Middle East for decades.

My grand father King 'Abdallah and my great uncle King Faysal of Syria and later Iraq had hoped that the aspirations of the Arab inhabitants of the lands liberated during the Great Arab Revolt of 1916 and of the Jewish settlers in Palestine might be compatible provided certain conditions could be satisfied. This was not to be. Rivalries and suspicions between the players in our region and the catastrophic situation of the Jews of Europe combined to end the dream of my forefathers. The unity of the Arab lands was frustrated, and the Jewish state of Israel was born in violence.

This was a situation which I inherited when I acceded to the throne of the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan, and which has challenged us for more than 40 years. It was clear to me that my duty was to exert every possible effort to spare my people the suffering and cruelty of war, and to bequeath them a legacy of peace. On October 26, 1994, when Israel and Jordan signed their peace treaty, we did not make peace only with Israel, we also made it with ourselves, confident in our belief that this was the only way we could break out of the cycle of violence which has devastated our lands and our peoples. Our vision and purpose in making peace with Israel was not just to end the state of war. The equation of no war and no peace which had defined the relations of Jordan and Arab states with Israel for 25 years had proved futile. We decided to a warm peace with Israel—a peace which makes it possible for our peoples to breach the fears which separated them for too long, to do business, to make friends with each other, if they wish, to benefit from what each has to offer, and to work together to create a better life for themselves and for all those who live in the same region and share the same hopes.

The Jordanian-Israeli peace treaty marked the end of one period in our history, and the dawning of another. It is a first step towards the restoration of harmony in the holy land which God ordained, but which man disrupted. The benefits to both parties are equally rewarding. Jordan, which had been virtually landlocked, now once again has access to the Mediterranean. Israel can now look beyond the previous confines to live in a region of peace, but in making peace with Israel and in determining to live with Israel on terms of mutual trust, security, and cooperation, we did not forget or neglect the other vital component of the holy land, that of the Palestinian people and their legitimate rights on their own land. We believe that the Palestinian people have the right, in this new era of peace, to enjoy the same security and the same hoped-for prosperity on their own land. We will continue to support them as we have through all these years in all their legitimate goals and in all their legitimate activities.

The realization of the Palestinians' right to self-determination, to return or compensation, and to a decent life are legitimate aims. We share with them many other concerns, such as access to water, the environment, the settlement of the problem of their refugees and displaced populations, and we share with them, and not only with them, our concern for the future of holy Jerusalem. For members of the three Abrahamic faiths, on every continent, the old city of Jerusalem is the goal of pilgrims and a pole of prayer. Mosques, churches, and temples—each bear witness to the central place of the holy city in the thoughts and visions of believers around the world. It has always been our hope that holy Jerusalem will not be a cause for conflict, but a platform for reconciliation. Its history should never again be liberation for some and loss for others. Its rightful place in history is where the three faiths—Judaism, Christianity, and Islam—converge, and where sovereignty is God's alone. I do not believe that the problem of Jerusalem presents an insurmountable difficulty. The Greater City of Jerusalem can be the capital of both the state of Israel and Palestine.

Jerusalem should be a shining symbol, and the essence of peace forever between Palestinians and Israelis, as well as all the followers of the three great monotheistic religions.

The Jordanian-Israeli peace treaty is, we hope, a historic step in the construction of the new era of peace in the Middle East. Our peace with Israel is comprehensive insofar as it removes all subjects of contention between us. Yet to be comprehensive on the scale of the whole region, we are still a way to go. [as heard]

Peace is not just a signing of treaties. The signatories must have a genuine commitment to all that peace implies: The free movement of people, goods, and ideas across frontiers, the shared commitment to resolve common problems and to respect one another' interests. There must be a shared consensus of common values, respect for human rights and basic freedoms equally between all citizens and, above all, the right of children to food, clothing, education, and freedom from fear.

What is the real purpose of peace? In our view, it is to promote the security and the prosperity of peoples. Without security, there can be no assured prosperity; and without prosperity, there can be no assured security. In the modern history of the Middle East, there have been many attempts to erect security systems and arrangements either between external powers and regional states, or between regional states themselves. None of these arrangements were effective in preventing wars and conflicts in the Middle East.

In the nightmare scenario between the invasion of Kuwait and the end of the war in the Gulf, I did my best to convince the international community to help us to contain and solve the problem within an Arab context. I was not successful. And the sequence of events before, during, and after the war confirmed my worst fears. The security of the supply of oil was at least temporarily assured, but the security of the region was seriously jeopardized. The continued destabilization of Iraq does not contribute to stability, security, or peace in the Middle East. On the contrary, it poses a serious threat to them all.

We cannot look with indifference as the plight of the people of Iraq grows more and more tragic with every renewal of the Security Council's imposition of sanctions. As the misery increases, I cannot, nor can any Jordanian or other Arab family, sleep comfortably in our beds with the specter of the sick and hungry children of Iraq before our eyes.

I wish to state categorically against all rumors, fears, and speculation that as a Hashemite, I personally have no ambition in Iraq. Yet I can no longer turn a blind eye and a deaf ear to the anguish and needs of the people of Iraq. They have been imprisoned for years by an international embargo and have endured for far too long the absence of democracy, pluralism, and human rights.

All the Iraqi people, all the Arab states, together with the international community, must join together to bring an end to all the causes of Iraqi suffering and denial, both internally and externally. I stand firmly for the preservation of the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Iraq. I would encourage and support an immediate free dialogue between the credible representatives of the three major elements that comprise the people of Iraq, mainly the Sunni and Shiite Arabs and the Kurds, to achieve a national reconciliation. This would remove the fears and suspicions which have shuttered the relations and threatened the future. I would offer all my support and implore them to engage in a serious dialogue to formulate a new constitution defining their respective aspirations and rights within the context of their one country of Iraq, based on democracy, pluralism, and respect for human rights.

Ladies and gentlemen: Since 1948, Jordan has had to assume extraordinary burdens, such as three sudden and massive waves of refugees and repeated disruption of our economy. These have severely strained our limited financial, social, and institutional resources. In the last quarter of 1995, an opportunity will be available to the governments and institutions of Europe to take part in the construction of a new Middle East. The Middle East-North Africa Summit to be held in Amman on 29 October this year will attempt to translate into concrete economic terms some of the ideas and aspirations of the Casablanca economic summit which preceded it last year. A further window of opportunity will be the Barcelona conference, scheduled for November of this year, the main theme of which will be a Euro-Mediterranean partnership. We hope that the Barcelona conference, which Jordan will attend, will pay special attention to the countries of the eastern Mediterranean. This area is a natural bridge between Europe and the Middle East. The conference can open a door for Europe into a region of vast natural resources and important markets. And it can open a window for our region onto the economic and financial landscape of Europe.

The choice of Amman for the second Middle East-North Africa summit reflects, I believe, a growing consensus among international financial institutions and business corporations that Jordan now offers a favorable location and a climate for public funding and private investment and projects on both the Jordanian and the general scene. Jordan's treaty of peace with Israel paves the way for the emergence of a new and potentially powerful economic bloc, which would include Palestine and Egypt. Projects involving the cooperation of these four entities will be presented at the Amman summit. We hope that these will ultimately provide examples for other Middle East countries of the benefits of cooperative and integrated development and the tangible rewards of peace. Such a bloc would provide markets, manpower, and technological resources which would attract not only European, American, and Asian investment, but also some of the Arab capital, private and public, which now finds havens outside the region.

Jordan will continue this endeavor to create a model of social, political, and economic stability, which we hope will act as a positive example. The Jordanian National Charter, ratified in 1991, reflects a Jordanian consensus for democracy, pluralism, basic freedoms, gender equity, human rights, and a free market economy. Since the adoption of the National Charter, successive Jordanian governments have sought to implement its tenets into the daily life of our people. We believe that we have the ability, the will, and the experience to generate from our own resources a momentum which will transform a developing country into a developed one, and to set a dynamic example in our region. The support and the investment we seek are the sparks needed to drive the great human potential of our region.

Europe and our region are extensions of one another. We invite you to join us to further and deepen the ancient bonds between us, and together to build the better we seek. As I leave you today, my friends, I am happy to announce that I am heading to the United States at the invitation of President Clinton to attend the ratification of yet another agreement between the sole legitimate representative of the Palestinian people and the prime minister of Israel. It is truly another important breakthrough on the road to comprehensive Middle east peace, the result of negotiations and commitment to the cause of peace. We praise the efforts of all who contributed to its achievement.

On behalf of Queen Nur, the prime minister of Jordan, and all my colleagues, and for myself, I thank you for your warm welcome. Thank you and God bless your worthy endeavors. [applause]

Israeli Report Says Tiberias Lake Water 'Poisonous'

JN2309153395 Amman AL-URDUN in Arabic
23 Sep 95 p 1

[FBIS Translated Text] Israeli researchers at Lake Tiberias Research Institute have found that the lake's water is contaminated with a certain kind of algae that reproduces there.

The researchers said that these algae secrete poisonous substances that render the lake's water undrinkable.

The researchers noted that it is dangerous to use this water before arriving at a scientific method to purify it from the poisons these algae are secreting, which is something that is being sought now.

Israeli Official Denies Report

JN2309165395 Amman Radio Jordan Network in Arabic 1400 GMT 23 Sep 95

[FBIS Translated Text] A responsible source at the Ministry of Water and Irrigation has denied that water pumped through a pipeline from Lake Tiberias contains poisonous substances or any other pollutants. The source said that a report by a weekly newspaper on this issue is totally baseless and lacks credibility. The source added that water which comes from Lake Tiberias undergoes a laboratory test to make sure that it meets local and world standards.

Hizballah Radio Details Statement on Taba Agreement

NC2609081395 Ba'labakk Voice of the Oppressed in Arabic 0630 GMT 26 Sep 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Hizballah has released a statement in which it labels the Taba agreement another crime committed by [Yasir] 'Arafat. It said this crime is a link in the chain of capitulation and submission that 'Arafat initiated with the signing of the ill-omened Oslo accord. The Taba agreement contains practical details that turn dangerous concessions into facts submitted by 'Arafat in response to the Israeli conditions. The Taba agreement is bound to legitimize the treacherous Israeli occupation of the West Bank by approving the self-rule authority under Israeli sovereignty.

Hizballah's statement added that 'Arafat's step represents the crime of the age against the Palestinian people. This step does not express this people's objectives and hopes. It only concerns its signatories, who have been [word indistinct] by the sons of Palestine since they accepted sitting at the negotiating table with the Zionist enemy. The statement noted that they have no right to discuss the most sacred issue in the Islamic nation.

Hizballah urged our kin in the occupied territories and in the diaspora, as well as the sons of our Arab and Islamic nation, to adopt a historic stance and undermine this new crime and prove that the Palestinian cause is stronger than all traitors and plotters and that the plot will not succeed.

Syria, U.S. Said To Prefer Extension of al-Hirawi Term

NC2509212595 Beirut AL-SAFIR in Arabic 22 Sep 95 p 3

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] Sources close to Maronite Patriarch Nasrallah Sfayr have told AL-SAFIR that Prime Minister Rafiq al-Hariri had stressed to the patriarch that extending the term of President Ilyas al-Hirawi is "the fruit of Syrian-American accord".

The sources described the recent meeting between al-Hariri and Sfayr as positive and frank. The two exchanged views on all topical issues, and the patriarch heard al-Hariri's viewpoint regarding the election law.

According to AL-SAFIR's information about the meeting, which lasted for three hours with interruptions for lunch and a tete-a- tete, al-Hariri tried to reassure Sfayr about the reasons favoring the option of extending the term of President al-Hirawi. These reasons, al-Hariri told Sfayr, are temporary and will disappear as soon as the regional circumstances change. He said we will soon see momentum pushing things at all levels. He said Christian representation in the government will be corrected, and he gave some economic figures to show that the situation is good, not as portrayed by the opposition.

According to the report, al-Hariri started the meeting by discussing the presidential election. He noted the difficult situation at the negotiations [with Israel], which forces Syria and Lebanon into involuntary and compelling steps such as extending the presidential term. He said this is not final, because as soon as the regional situation improves and the Syrian position becomes stronger, a new president will be elected.

Our information is that al-Hariri reviewed Syrian-Lebanese relations, stressing that Syria has no ambitions in Lebanon. He explained that the link between the local situation and the regional situation has been there for a long time, and that the Syrian sponsorship of a solution in Lebanon has a positive impact.

The Maronite patriarch reportedly replied by emphasizing Bkirki's general principles regarding sovereignty and independence. He stressed that surrender to the will of others is unacceptable.

Cardinal Sfayr reiterated his position on the presidential election, saying: "In principle, we reject the amendment of the Constitution because any amendment will open the door for other amendments and all this will lead to the extension and so on (an implicit reference to reports that there are intentions to extend the term of the Chamber of Deputies).

Here, al-Hariri reportedly recalled what Chamber of Deputies speaker Nabih Birri said in Qartaba a few days ago—namely, that "the amendment will not be at the expense of the general interest, and that there will be no extension of the term of the Chamber of Deputies".

Al-Hariri was cited as saying that things are moving toward an extension for President al-Hirawi, and that this option was the result of a Syrian-American accord. [passage omitted]

Amal, 'Resistance' Claim Attacks on Israeli Forces

NC2609065995 Beirut Radio Lebanon in Arabic 0530 GMT 26 Sep 95

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] Israeli occupation forces shelled areas in al-Nabatiyah and Iqlim al-Tuffah last night. Resistance men yesterday carried out operations against occupation forces' positions in 'Alman and al-Shumariyah. The Amal Movement claimed responsibility for two attacks, while the Islamic Resistance said its fighters attacked the Israeli position in Balat. [passage omitted]

Elsewhere, Israeli naval forces continue their siege of the southern coast. Israeli gunboats are cruising off Lebanese territorial water to prevent Lebanese fishing boats from sailing.

The Israeli army admitted that two of its soldiers were killed in the Resistance shelling of the Balat position. [passage omitted]

According to security sources, Resistance men fired six rockets at the occupied territories. Israeli helicopters have been directing machine-gun fire at areas near the occupied territories in the western sector since 0600 today. [passage omitted]

'Resistance' Claims Attack on SLA Patrol

NC2609100595 Beirut Voice of Lebanon in Arabic 0915 GMT 26 Sep 95

[FBIS Translated Text] The Islamic Resistance announced that one of its groups detonated an explosive charge as a Lahdist [South Lebanese Army, SLA] patrol was passing along the Rshaf road at 0930 today. The Resistance said the blast inflicted casualties on the patrol personnel.

Elsewhere, the Black 13 September battalions issued a statement saying that they attacked a Bint Jubayl position with rockets and machine guns earlier today. Another group attacked the Haddathah and Bayt Yahun positions last night, the statement added.

Two SLA Members Killed in Blast

NC2609115895 Beirut Radio Lebanon in Arabic 1130 GMT 26 Sep 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Two members of the Agent Lahd militia [South Lebanese Army, SLA] were killed and several wounded when the Islamic Resistance detonated an explosive charge as an Agent patrol was passing along the Rshaf-Dibil road at 0930 today.

A statement issued by the Islamic Resistance notes that the wounded members were transported to occupied Palestine by an Israeli helicopter.

Khaddam, Iranian Envoy Term Taba 'Major Treason'

LD2609103095 Tehran IRNA in English 1016 GMT 26 Sep 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Damascus, Sept. 26, IRNA — The second phase of the Oslo accord, signed in Taba, Egypt, was condemned by Iran's ambassador to Damascus Hojjat ol-Eslam Mohammad Hasan Akhtari and Syrian Vice-President 'Abd-al-Halim Khaddam in a meeting held by the two sides here on Monday [25 September].

The Syrian vice-president termed the agreement as a major treason against the Palestinian people and added that (Yasir) 'Arafat does not represent the people of Palestine.

The Iranian ambassador said that the measure taken by 'Arafat is in line with the interests of the Zionist regime and 'Arafat, who has no mandate from the Palestinian nation, is ceding Palestinian lands and resources to the Zionists.

During the meeting the two officials also discussed bilateral relations and other important issues.

Radio Commentary: Taba Agreement 'Regrettable'

JN2509170595 Damascus Syrian Arab Republic Radio Network in Arabic 1133 GMT 25 Sep 95

[Station commentary]

[FBIS Translated Text] Gentlemen: Given the fact that the Oslo accord produced an ugly, limited self-rule in Gaza and Jericho, what can the capitulatory agreement initialed between Israel and the self-rule authority in Taba yesterday produce—the agreement that made 'Arafat and Peres jubilant, caused them to smile, and pushed 'Arafat to brandish the 450-page agreement in his hand? Peres might have had the right to express jubilation over the outcome achieved; namely, the consecration of the Israeli domination of the West Bank and the explicit recognition of Israel's right to protect and expand its military bases on the territory falsely called settlement areas. Moreover, Peres might have had the right to express jubilation, particularly since Israel has been relieved of the task of confronting the Palestinian people in the West Bank, as happened in Gaza before. Now, the forces of the self-rule authority will have to confront the Palestinians, coerce them, and liquidate their intifadah. By so doing, Israel will spare itself the condemnation and denunciation of the world public opinion, which it has had to contend with due to the oppressive practices and methods it has used to squash the Palestinian intifadah. From now on, the self-rule forces will be carrying out this task instead. The oppression and suppression of the Palestinians will from now on be carried out by fellow Palestinians. A clique that is ostensibly Palestinian and not alien to them will be oppressing fellow Palestinians, muzzling them, and confiscating their freedom, although this clique is actually alien to them and to their aspirations, hopes, and ambitions.

What has made 'Arafat happy? How can the Taba agreement give rise to happiness, given the fact that this agreement was the offspring of the distorted Oslo accord? Definitely, the Taba agreement is saddening and regrettable, because the Palestine question has been mishandled by a handful of Palestinians who have shown a lack of determination and resolve and accepted the crumbs offered them by their enemies, as if these crumbs were not tiny parts of their usurped homeland and small parts of the rights of their beleaguered people. Can the perpetuation of Israeli domination and oppression and the maintenance of Israeli control of the resources of the West Bank and the Gaza Strip, which will enable Israel to obtain the largest and biggest share of the bountiful resources of the Palestinian territory, give rise to happiness? Can the distorted Taba newborn, which is the offspring of the distorted Oslo accord, produce the happiness expressed by Israeli negotiators? Sugarcoating death cannot make it delectable, as the saying goes. Regardless of the praise heaped on this agreement and any other agreements it can produce, and in spite of the veneer that can be placed on them, time will show those deceived that the doors they have gone through will only get them to a wasteland whose prospects contain nothing other than mirages that cause one to get breathless without going anywhere. Undoubtedly, Israel will be deluding itself if it believes that by such weak agreements it can promote its security and achieve a measure of stability and protection for its citizens. Obviously, the reaction of the Palestinian people of the West Bank and the Gaza Strip to the agreements Israel has concluded with the limited self-rule authority must enlighten it so that it may realize that peace is not only texts drafted or agreements on paper. For when peace becomes synonymous with texts and agreements, and fails to win the hearts and minds of people and convince them that their territory will actually be liberated and that all their rights regained, then these agreements will not be worth the ink and paper used to draft them. Overlooking the fundamentals that must be complied with to achieve peace can only produce a fragile entity that will soon collapse. As for viable peace, it is the peace that will [passage indistinct; break in transmission for approximately 30 seconds].

Khaddam on Birri Meeting, Lebanese Presidential Term

NC2509163095 Beirut AL-SAFIR in Arabic 11 Sep 95 pp 1, 17

[Report by Faysal Salman in Damascus]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] Syrian Vice President 'Abd-al-Halim Khaddam has asserted that Chamber of Deputies Speaker Nabih Birri and Prime Minister Rafiq al-Hariri have finally transcended their differences—which were merely differences in views—and have agreed on strong methods for regulating the relationship between the two institutions they represent.

In an exclusive statement to AL-SAFIR in his office in Damascus three days after the conclusion of the Birri-al-Hariri talks in the Syrian capital, Khaddam said the crisis has been settled in full and there is no chance of a setback.

Khaddam, who together with Syrian Chief of Staff General Hikmat al-Shihabi sponsored the Birri-al-Hariri agreement, said what resulted was a full agreement, not merely a truce. He added that a truce is usually between adversaries while the differences between Birri and al-Hariri were over modalities of work. [passage omitted]

Khaddam noted that the Birri-al-Hariri agreement is not directed at anyone but is in the interest of the homeland. This being the case, it is illogical to speak about individual clauses of the agreement; it is enough to say that the two men have shown a high degree of responsibility and have overcome a passing crisis—which will have a positive effect on national and pan-Arab interests.

Khaddam said Damascus, which has offered and will offer everything to help Lebanon, will spare no effort to defend this agreement against those who stand to lose from Lebanon's rebirth, recovery, and reconstruction. He added that the enemies of the Chamber of Deputies, the government, and the al-Ta'if Accord who have acted and collaborated to confuse the advance of the government and reconstruction in Lebanon will not succeed. Lebanese officials have proved that they are fully aware of the dangers and of regional developments and are too strong to be affected by hate-mongers, enemies, or intruders. [passage omitted]

Khaddam said the Lebanese want everything overnight. They do not want to work but still want a high standard of living. They send their children to private schools and import foreign housemaids and workers. They evade paying taxes and then say the government is responsible for the budget deficit and high prices. He added all Lebanese are responsible for finding solutions to their economic recession. This recession is sweeping the world, so how much more so a country that has just emerged from a 20-year war. [passage omitted]

Regarding the end of the presidential term, Khaddam said the Syrian leadership wants to keep this issue a Lebanese affair but we have long felt that there is a "consensus" between Speaker Birri and Prime Minister al-Hariri on extending the term of President Ilyas al-Hirawi. Everyone in Lebanon and Syria appreciates al-Hirawi's stances and sacrifices. [passage omitted]

Afghanistan

Taleban Reportedly Withdraws Ultimatum on Kabul

LD2409182795 Kabul Radio Afghanistan Network in Pashto 1530 GMT 24 Sep 95

[FBIS Translated Text] The ISI [Inter-Services Intelligence of Pakistan] Taleban took back their ultimatum about attacking Kabul. AFP reported that Mulla Abdol Qayum, alias Mulla Meshr, who three days ago gave an ultimatum about attacking Kabul, said today that he did not contemplate attacking Kabul. He said he wanted to preserve the present situation around Kabul. The Taleban leaders were forced to make this decision after their attacks during the past two days were defeated in the direction of Maydan Shahr. It is said that the ISI's Taleban leaders had reached the conclusion that they could not achieve victory through military means, but the ISI force them to embark on such an act.

Large Anti-Taleban Demonstration Held in Herat

LD2509184295 Kabul Radio Afghanistan Network in Pashto 1530 GMT 25 Sep 95

[FBIS Translated Text] The people of Herat held demonstrations against Pakistani militia. Reports reaching here from Herat say that a group of Taleban entered Anwari market in Herat city and threatened a number of youths and publicly cut their hair. As a result of this act, the youths held demonstrations and marched through Shahr-e Now. A Taleban armed vehicle blocked their way near the Cinema Square where the demonstrators clashed with the Taleban. The demonstrators disarmed the Taleban. This demonstration turned into a large anti-Taleban rally after a large number of people joined in.

Radio Mashhad reported that a bomb explosion shook the Bakhtar airline ticket office in Herat and caused extensive damages. The militia used the buildings around the office, which were used as rest houses for returnees, to accommodate foreign mercenaries.

Hekmatyar, Iran's Borujerdi Review Developments

LD2209173195 Tehran IRNA in English 1649 GMT 22 Sep 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Tehran, Sept. 22, IRNA — Deputy Foreign Minister for Asia and Pacific Affairs, 'Ala'eddin Borujerdi, upon his arrival in Jalalabad today met with the leader of Hezb-e Eslami [Islamic Party], Golboddin Hekmatyar, and reviewed the latest developments in Afghanistan.

Expressing concern over continuation of Afghan domestic conflicts, Borujerdi said that the conflicts will weaken the limited potentials of this Islamic country and pave the way for further spread of the enemies' influence in Afghanistan. He added that the previous experience proves that Afghan problems cannot be resolved by military means and that the negotiation among all the jihadi groups is the only way for achieving an understanding in Afghanistan. He also announced the Islamic Republic of Iran's readiness for bringing about a political understanding in that country.

In the meeting, Hekmatyar thanked the Iranian sincere efforts for helping to put an end to the problems in his country and said that "Hezb-e Eslami is against continuation of conflicts in this country, but the need for reaching a peace can be fulfilled by the attention of all the groups towards the country's realities and by leaving behind narrow-minded, hegemonic tendencies."

"We and the allied jihadi groups will welcome any logical and principled offer," Hekmatyar added.

India

Parties Address Resumption of U.S. Arms to Pakistan

Communists Call For End to Military Pact

BK2409125595 Delhi All India Radio Network in English 1230 GMT 24 Sep 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] The Communist Party of India-Marxist has called for cancellation of the Indo-U.S. military cooperation pact in view of the U.S. decision to resume arms supplies to Pakistan. In a statement in New Delhi today, the party politburo has assailed the Clinton administration's decision to waive the Pressler amendment facilitating the arms supply. The party said this will spark off another round of arms race in the subcontinent.

Congress-I Sees Increase in Defense

BK2509132195 Delhi All India Radio Network in English 1230 GMT 25 Sep 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] The Congress-I has expressed concern over the U.S. decision to supply arms to Pakistan. The party spokesman, Mr. V.N. Gadgil, said it will tilt the security balance in favor of Islamabad. He said India will be constrained to increase its defense budget.

Radio Assails U.S. Decision on Aid to Pakistan

BK2309140595 Delhi All India Radio General Overseas Service in English 1010 GMT 23 Sep 95

[Commentary by A.J. Philip]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] The modification in the Pressler law to facilitate sale of arms and economic aid to Pakistan has not come as a surprise. Given the support the move has from the Clinton administration, the Senate decision could not have been any different. Under the amended law, Pakistan will be provided with arms and military equipment worth $370 million. The proceeds of the sale of 28 F-16 aircraft, which would not be transferred to Pakistan because of the Pressler law, to a third country would also go to Pakistan. Obviously, Mr. Hank Brown, the Republican Senator, who initiated the move, and others of his ilk seem to have been taken in by the Pakistani propaganda about the unfairness in denying Pakistan equipment already paid for.

It does not seem to have occurred to them that it is too simplistic a view to stand scrutiny. They are eager to reward an ally for past services, particularly during the Soviet intervention in Afghanistan. This precisely was the burden of the Pakistan prime minister Ms. Benazir Bhutto's song when she visited the U.S. in April last. That time, President Clinton had concurred with her on the need to remove this irritant in U.S.-Pakistan relations. The sudden decision, therefore, signifies the fulfillment of the promise. However, if they think the way they did, the Senators have not taken into account the ground realities in Pakistan.

As it is, there had been no change in the situation in the subcontinent since 1990, when Senator Larry Pressler introduced his famous amendment banning military and economic aid to Pakistan in view of its possession of nuclear capability, if not nuclear bombs. In fact, it was the liberal financial and other assistance to the tune of $5 billion a year that Pakistan used to get that enabled it to pursue its nuclear ambition. It was the inability of the then U.S. president Mr. George Bush to certify that Pakistan did not possess nuclear capability that prevented supply of arms to Pakistan. Since the situation remains much the same and president Clinton's team would be unable to give such a certificate, any amendment in the Pressler law was uncalled for. As there is no indication of Pakistan having forsaken its nuclear program, the resumption of aid is tantamount to rewarding its obstinacy. If the U.S. believes that the aid will help it to exert more influence on Pakistan and bring it in line, it is nearly chasing a mirage. There is as yet nothing to suggest that such a policy, which had miserably failed in the past, will succeed this time.

Had the U.S. been really concerned about nuclear proliferation, it would have stayed put with the Pressler law. As the American intelligence reports have established Pakistan has been clandestinely developing its missile capability by acquiring M-11 missiles and technology from China. The U.S. as indeed the whole world knows that Pakistan has been encouraging terrorism in India. If the U.S. is in the vanguard of the fight against terrorism as it claims to be, it would have already declared Pakistan a terrorist state. It is only natural that India is concerned about the development. Whatever military equipment Pakistan acquires will eventually be directed against it. The acquisition of P-3C-2 Army and maritime reconnaissance and strike aircraft will enable Pakistan to attack any target in India. Similarly, the see-night targeting kits Pakistan will now get would facilitate attack on Indian tank formations even at night. India has no other option but to take appropriate steps to strengthen its defense capability to meet any threat from across the border. If in the given situation, scarce resources are diverted for arms acquisition, it cannot be helped. Under the circumstances, an arms race in the subcontinent will be inevitable.

Mukherjee To Attend UN Session, Meet Christopher

BK2609094895 Delhi All India Radio Network in English 0830 GMT 26 Sep 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] The external affairs minister, Mr. Pranab Mukherjee, today left for London on his way to New York heading a high-level delegation to attend the 50th session of the UN General Assembly. He will meet his counterparts from various countries during the session and address the General Assembly and meetings of the G-15 and G-77. Mr. Mukherjee is expected to meet the U.S. Secretary of State, Mr. Warren Christopher.

Rao Returns After Turkmenistan, Kyrgyzstan Visits

BK2309134795 Delhi All India Radio Network in English 1230 GMT 23 Sep 95

[FBIS Transcribed Excerpt] The intergovernmental joint commission of India and Kyrgyzstan will meet next month to firm up the details of cooperation identified during the prime minister's talks with the Kyrgyz leaders. This was stated by Mr. Narasimha Rao at the Bishkek airport this morning before leaving for New Delhi. Talking to our correspondent, Mohan Singh, the prime minister said that potential and possibility of cooperation between the two countries have been explored during his visit. [passage omitted]

The prime minister has since arrived in New Delhi after his five-day visit to Turkmenistan and Kyrgyzstan.

Radio Views Rao Visit to Central Asian Republics

BK2409142695 Delhi All India Radio Network in English 0245 GMT 24 Sep 95

[Unattributed commentary]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] The prime minister's five-day visit to the Central Asian Republics of Turkmenistan and Kyrgyzstan from the 19th of this month has opened up a new chapter in the economic and trade relations of India with these countries. The visit is a testimony to the Indian keenness to have a closer relationship with these erstwhile Soviet Union republics. It is also a signal for the new republics in the region that India is committed to the economic growth of these countries through both trade and investment.

The tangible results of Mr. Rao's visit was signing of agreements with these countries in arts, science, tourism, and sports. The most important agreements were establishing an Indo-Turkmen Joint Commission, institutionalizing Foreign Office consultations, and creating a cultural exchange program. But there is much more to the visit than these agreements. New Delhi feels that the trilateral agreements among India, Iran, and Turkmenistan earlier this year will pave the way for a new trade route from South Asia to Central Asia. Mr. Rao took the opportunity to review the progress made in a Memorandum of Understanding to provide for unhindered movement of goods from Bombay to Bandar Abbas in Iran and onwards by road and rail to the Central Asian countries. The foreign ministers of all the three countries also met in Turkmenistan capital of Ashkhabad when Mr. Rao was there, and India expressed satisfaction over the progress in the treaty.

During his meetings with Turkmenistan President Mr. Saparmurad Atayevich Niyazov and Deputy Prime Minister Shikhmuradov, Mr. Rao discussed in detail issues of regional security, bilateral and economic cooperation, and matters of mutual interest. Mr. Rao appreciated the stand of Turkmenistan for adopting a policy of neutrality and praised the commitment of the republic to stick to its secular and democratic past. India also offered a second credit of $10 million to Turkmenistan to help the country to purchase products for setting up joint ventures.

In Kyrgyzstan, the prime minister signed agreements on cooperation in science and technology, tourism, and sports. The Indo-Kyrgyz Joint Commission will meet in New Delhi next month to review the progress in various spheres of agreements. The president, Mr. A. Akayev, and the prime minister, Abbas Dzhumagulov, assured Mr. Rao that the country is committed to secular ideals and social justice. Mr. Rao, on his part, hoped that mutually beneficial contacts between the two countries will have important contributions in their efforts to fight against terrorism and separatism.

Russian Trade Said To Reach 60 Billion Rupees Mark

BK2409104895 Delhi All India Radio Network in English 0245 GMT 24 Sep 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] The commerce minister has expressed confidence that Indo-Russian trade will touch the 60 billion rupees mark by the end of this year. Mr. Chidambaram has urged Indian business to take up new challenges in the Russian market under the changed economic scenario. He was speaking at the closing ceremony of the first Indo-Russian buyer-seller meet in Moscow yesterday. The Russian market has become sophisticated and demanding. He said the government is alive to problems faced by Indian business in trading with Russia and appropriate steps are being taken to remove all bottlenecks.

Visiting Kuwaiti Official Opposes Iraq Partition

LD2209205395 Kuwait KUNA in Arabic 1829 GMT 22 Sep 95

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] New Delhi, 22 Sep (KUNA) — Ghannam al-Jumhur, a member of the Kuwaiti National Assembly, who is heading a Kuwaiti parliamentary delegation visiting India, has called on the Indian Government to help release the Kuwaiti prisoners, and said that Iraq has refused to provide information on their whereabouts.

Al-Jumhur stressed in a news conference he held today that any change in Iraq should be carried out by the Iraqi people themselves, and not by foreign powers. He said that the Iraqi people are the only ones who should decide the fate of their country.

He pointed out that Kuwait completely opposes the partitioning of Iraq, because this would be bound to spread instability in the Gulf region. He stated that Kuwait supports Iraq's regional unity and independence.

Al-Jumhur stated that Saddam Husayn constitutes a danger to Kuwaiti regional unity, and said that his continuation in power exposes Kuwait to the danger of aggression. He added that the security situation and the political developments in Iraq are in a state of flux and completely unclear. Al-Jumhur said that the southern parts of Iraq are facing famine, while the northern part is in an unstable state.

He said that as a result of the threats to which Kuwait is exposed, it has to adopt the necessary steps to protect and guarantee its unity and sovereignty, and this is what motivates us to conclude defense agreements with four permanent member countries of the Security Council and other friendly countries that played an important role in the war to liberate Kuwaiti from the Iraqi occupation. [passage omitted]

Pakistani Troops Reportedly Fire Into Kashmir

BK2209140995 Delhi All India Radio Network in English 1230 GMT 22 Sep 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Pakistani troops resorted to unprovoked heavy mortar firing in village Kalash in Punch sector [of Kashmir] last evening. Five civilians, including a woman, were seriously injured. Our Punch correspondent says the present incident of mortar firing by Pakistani troops is the first of its kind in this area after the 1971 war. Earlier, they were indulging in small arms firing frequently.

Pakistan Asked To Stop Aiding Militancy in Kashmir

BK2409161695 Delhi All India Radio Network in English 1530 GMT 24 Sep 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] In the Kashmir rally, the Congress-I organized a mass rally in Bandipura town yesterday. This was the first time in six years that any political party organized a public rally in any main town of the valley.

Addressing the gathering, Pradesh [State] Congress Committee-I president, Mr. Ghulam Rasool Kar, asked Pakistan to stop aiding and abetting militancy. The party state general secretary, Mr. Taj Mohiuddin, asked misguided youths to shun violence and join the national mainstream. He said militancy has brought miseries to the people and the gun is no solution to any problem.

'Longest Gap' in Contact With Kidnappers Reported

BK2509073695 Hong Kong AFP in English 0721 GMT 25 Sep 95

[By Surinder Oberoi]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] SRINAGAR, India, Sept 25 (AFP)—Muslim separatist militants holding four Westerners in Kashmir have not contacted the Indian authorities for six days, the longest gap since the tourists were seized nearly three months ago.

Kashmir government spokesman Kulbushan Jindiyal told AFP on Monday [25 September] that there has been no contact since the night of September 19 with Al-Faran, the shadowy group holding the four Westerners.

"It is the longest gap since the crisis began in July," he said.

Al-Faran seized Britons Paul Wells and Keith Mangan, American Don Hutchings and German Dirk Hasert in early July while they were trekking in the Kashmir district of Pahalgam.

A fifth hostage, Norwegian Hans-Christian Ostro, was murdered in August.

Jindiyal said the Indian authorities hoped the Al-Faran guerrillas, who are reportedly holed up somewhere in the Muslim- majority Kashmir Valley with their hostages, would establish contact soon.

"We hope the matter will be resolved peacefully soon," he said. "From what we know, the hostages are safe with the militants."

But a Kashmir government source who requested anonymity said: "We are really worried.

"A gap like this is worrisome, because honestly we don't know what is happening, the source said.

"We have no idea why they are not contacting us," the source added. "We can only hope for the best."

Officials said a Kashmir police officer, Rajinder Tickoo, was trying to reestablish contact with Al-Faran, which is believed to be made up of Afghan mercenaries.

Tickoo had been talking to Al-Faran representatives by radio until two weeks ago. Since then, the authorities have been communication with the abductors by telephone through Muslim intermediaries.

The break in communications with Al-Faran followed the publication last week of excerpts of radio conversations between Tickoo and the rebels in an Indian news magazine.

Al-Faran is demanding the release of 15 Muslim militants from Indian prisons in exchange for the tourists. The Indian government has refused a swap and denied newspaper reports that a deal was in the offing.

Al-Faran is believed to be constantly shifting the four Westerners from one hideout to another. Indian officials say they have ordered the security forces to stay clear of the guerrillas to avoid endangering the hostages.

Several Kashmiri Muslim leaders have alleged that Al-Faran is linked to the Indian government and that the kidnappings and murder of Ostro have been staged to discredit the Kashmir Muslim separatist movement.

On Monday, Shabir Shah, a prominent leader of the Muslim separatist drive, urged Al-Faran to free the hostages unharmed but said he would not serve as a mediator. "I once again appeal to the abductors to free the innocent tourists," Shah said.

Muslim militants have kidnapped scores of Indians and a number of Westerners to demand the release of jailed guerrillas or focus world attention on the separatist campaign that has left more than 12,000 people dead since 1989.

'Powerful Explosion' Reportedly Injures Several

BK2509155495 Hong Kong AFP in English
1515 GMT 25 Sep 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] New Delhi, Sept 25 (AFP) — A powerful explosion has injured several people near the historic monument of the Red Fort, 15 kilometers (nine miles) from here, the Press Trust of India reported Monday [25 September].

Unconfirmed reports said the bomb was hidden in a scooter, the news agency said, adding "a number of people were injured."

Police have cordoned off the area. No further details were immediately available.

Radio Reports on Two Explosions

BK2609010595 Delhi All India Radio Network
in English 0035 GMT 26 Sep 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] In Delhi, 46 persons were injured, two of them seriously, in two separate explosions near Red Fort yesterday. According to the police, the blasts were caused by explosives packed in the scooters that were left parked in the area. The injured were admitted to the Loknayak Jaiprakash and Bara Hindu Rao Hospitals. Police have cordoned off the blast site and investigations are on.

Iran

IAEA Official Says NPT Safeguards Observed

LD2209192795 Tehran IRNA in English
1741 GMT 22 Sep 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Vienna, Sept. 22, IRNA — Iran is committed to the safeguards rules, said Director-General of International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) Hans Blix in a meeting here on Thursday [21 September] with the head of the Iranian Atomic Energy Organization Reza Amrollahi.

Blix added that despite the propaganda made by some countries charging the Islamic Republic of Iran with using atomic energy for military purpose, Iran has observed all international rules and regulations. "Nobody can deny the Islamic Republic of Iran's international cooperation in the area of atomic energy, particularly observance of the Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT)," Blix pointed out.

Underlining the Iranian right of having nuclear power plant, he promised to promote cooperation between the Iranian Atomic Energy Organization and IAEA.

Amrollahi is here at the head of a delegation from the Iranian Atomic Energy Organization to take part at the 39th annual general conference of the International Atomic Energy Agency.

Editorial Criticizes 'Arafat Over Taba Agreement

LD2509135995 Tehran IRNA in English
1012 GMT 25 Sep 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Tehran, Sep 25 (IRNA) — 'Arafat and his self-rule authority have been reduced to a tool of Israel, bound to embark on a fratricidal war for eliminating the Islamic movement in the occupied territories, a morning daily wrote Monday [25 September].

Referring to an agreement signed between Yasir 'Arafat and Israel in Egypt Sunday, the English-language TEHRAN TIMES added that the self-rule domain will be divided into three areas.

"Palestinians will take charge of internal security and public order in area A, they will maintain public order in area B and they will have civil responsibilities in both areas," it stressed.

But, it underlined, Israel will retain overall responsibility for external security, Israelis and the settlements across the West Bank, and to fight the Islamic movement in area C; unpopulated areas of strategic importance to Israel, full security and public order responsibility will remain with Israel.

"The Palestinians will have civil responsibilities such as economics, health and education in areas A and B," the editorial noted.

The accord provides for 12,000 policemen on the West Bank as the sole Palestinian security force, whose main duty is to maintain public order, confiscate what Israel considers illegal weapons and resist the Islamic movement, it stressed, adding "Palestinians cannot arrest Israelis."

"The Israeli Army will keep control of al-Khalil [Hebron] Mosque, guard Jewish residents, maintain overall responsibility for their safety," it said, adding that the question of Bayt-ul-Muqaddas has remained in limbo, while special arrangements have been provided for Rachel's Tomb in Bethlehem and Joseph's tomb in Nablus.

"The civil task of maintaining the self-rule areas has been given to the Palestinians while the security measures will remain in the hands of the Israelis," the article stated.

As a result, it reiterated, Palestinians will have to build up the territories for the Israeli masters who will decide the security and the external affairs of their land.

"Since the Palestinians cannot arrest Israelis, the accord is a new form of capitulation preparing the ground for Israelis to commit any crime against the Palestinians with impunity," it wrote.

Durable peace demands a just solution to the Palestinian problem, it said. "Any unfair agreement, ignoring the rights of the Palestinian Muslims, is doomed to fail," it concluded.

Velayati Heads Delegation to UN Session

Arrives; Schedule Outlined

LD2409082195 Tehran IRNA in English
0702 GMT 24 Sep 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] New York, Sept. 24, IRNA — Iranian Foreign Minister Ali Akbar Velayati heading a high-ranking political delegation arrived here early Sunday [24 September] morning to attend the 50th session of the U.N. General Assembly.

During his 10-day stay in the United States, Velayati is due to meet with U.N. Secretary General Butrus Butrus-Ghali and a number of officials from Islamic countries as well as member states of the non-aligned movement.

The foreign minister will also address the foreign ministerial meeting of the Organization of the Islamic Conference (OIC), the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM) and the Economic Cooperation Organization (ECO) which will be held on the sidelines of the General Assembly meeting.

He is also supposed to address the General Assembly to outline the stands of the Islamic Republic of Iran towards current regional and international developments.

Velayati will point out the role Iran plays in regional organizations and will underline the need for further consolidation of regional cooperation.

Addresses Assembly on Bosnia, Gulf

LD2509215795 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran First Program Network in Persian
2030 GMT 25 Sep 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Foreign Minister 'Ali Akbar Velayati today addressed the 50th General Assembly of the United Nations. He referred to the peaceful aims of the UN founders, and also to the organization's failure to attain the goal of achieving peace, as foreseen in its charter. He stressed the need for UN participation in decisions concerning the turbulent regions of the world.

Our foreign minister declared the support of the Islamic Republic of Iran for UN efforts to achieve peace in the turbulent areas of the world. In this connection, he reiterated our country's readiness to send peacekeeping forces to Bosnia-Herzegovina within the framework of moves by Islamic states.

Velayati referred to the sensitive and strategic Persian Gulf region, and underlined the numerous commonalities of the countries of the region. He emphasized that cooperation between the regional states can ensure peace, stability, and economic prosperity.

He added: The presence of foreign forces, whose interests conflict with stability and long-term cooperation between the Persian Gulf littoral states, has never been and will never be a suitable method for attaining the shared goal of ensuring security in this strategic waterway.

Ultimately, he added, in order to achieve viable and lasting security, all Persian Gulf countries must initiate joint endeavors to strengthen cooperation and security in their region. Moreover, through an organization made up of the littoral states, these countries should formulate confidence-inspiring moves, and ensure that these correspond with the needs of the region.

Comments on 'Arrogant' U.S. Policy

LD2609054095 Tehran IRNA in English
2149 GMT 25 Sep 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] United Nations Hq. (New York), Sept. 25, IRNA — Iranian Foreign Minister 'Ali Akbar Velayati in his address to the 50th General Assembly of the United Nations Monday [25 September] stated that although the goal behind setting up the world body was to save nations from the scourge of war by fostering the spirit of cooperation and friendship, the bipolar world and the Cold war era, had denied the UN the opportunity to effectively achieve its objectives.

"The arrogant approach of the Government of the United States of America towards the international community, and the unsuccessful attempts of American foreign policy establishment to exploit issues of global concern such as terrorism and proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, to advance extraneous and illegitimate agenda represent a most vivid and indeed dangerous manifestation of such unlawful unilateral measures.

"The U.S. secretary of state must put to rest the illusion of his government becoming both the judge and policeman of the global community. He also should not expect others to follow American pressures on independent states, designed with the sole objective of pleasing Zionist pressure groups even at the expense of disregarding the interests of American people," said Velayati.

He expressed regret on the dominance of a few states in shaping the approach which the organization was made to adopt, and felt sorry that certain members continued to pursue unilateral actions contrary to the provisions of the charter.

"Perhaps, they still do not really believe in the fundamental principle of sovereign equality of states which constitutes the corner-stone of the United Nations and requires each and every member of the organization to play its role in securing the objectives of the charter," said the foreign minister.

Velayati stressed the importance of sovereign nation members' participation in the decision making process to enhance the credibility, authority and ability of what he called "only truly universal organization" in dealing with the emerging challenges in a more efficient and unique fashion.

He emphasized that the United Nations has the potentiality in bringing together tremendous resources to facilitate achievements of the principles and objectives of its charter in the maintenance of international peace and security, the promotion of economic and social development, justice and mutual cooperation.

The world body would be celebrating its 50th anniversary on October 24, 1995.

Velayati then stressed the need for changes in the structure and procedures of the Security Council to create room for the full integration and participation of all member states.

The foreign minister added that such a measure would prevent preference of interests of powerful states "over the interests and choices of the majority" to effectively discharge its duties according to the charter, as the body constitutionally represented the general membership of the organization.

He stated that the need for strengthening the General Assembly as an effective organ of the United Nations due to the fact that it is the manifestation of the principle of sovereign equality where all member states directly participate.

The foreign minister proposed that all the organs should be accountable before the General Assembly, particularly, the Security Council to guarantee fuller and meaningful participation of the General Assembly membership in the decision making process and its final implementation.

In another part of his speech, Velayati expressed optimism towards the trend in the achievement of human rights, and said the achievements of the UN have been incorporated and reaffirmed in the final documents of the world conference on human rights in Vienna, the international conference on population and development in Cairo, the world summit for social development in Copenhagen and the fourth world conference on women in Beijing have.

"This clearly attest that while the international community has taken it upon itself to adopt a just and non-discriminatory approach through international cooperation towards protection and promotion of all human rights, including the right to development as universal, indivisible and interdependent rights, it continues to insist on setting promotion and protection, the sanctity of the principle of national sovereignty of all states is respected and the religious values and beliefs as well as cultural and national identity of no nation is infringed upon."

The Iranian foreign minister outlined one of the major post-Cold War era characteristics to be the expansion of peace-keeping operations, which has demanded an increasing share of the energy and resources of the U.N. he stated that the Islamic Republic of Iran is willing to participate in such operations.

However, he emphasized that all those member countries who are prepared to do so be given the equal right without facing any discrimination. He also stressed that the leadership of such operations should not be the monopoly of handful number of states.

"Here, I deem it necessary to reiterate the preparedness of the Islamic Republic of Iran to dispatch peace-keeping forces to Bosnia and Herzegovina, which we had earlier committed along with other Islamic countries to strengthen UNPROFOR [UN Protection Force] in order to enable it to discharge effectively its mandate protecting safe areas," stated Velayati.

He said the recent decision of the joint meeting of foreign and defense ministers of OIC Contact Group in Kuala Lumpur to establish the "assistance mobilization group in order to address the humanitarian, economic, legal and defense requirements of the republic of Bosnia-Herzegovina represents a proper approach of this tragedy in keeping with principles and objectives of the United Nations."

Velayati also touched on Iran's role to resolve the crisis in Tajikistan as well as the internal strife in Afghanistan, and said Tehran has left all communications channels open with Afghan Government and all other groups in order to find a negotiated settlement to the problem.

He emphasized that regional stability in Central Asia and the Caucasus depends on the economic prosperity of the region, and to this end, Iran was playing an important role at the 10-nation economic cooperation organization (ECO).

Turning to the Middle East and the Persian Gulf region, the Iranian foreign minister criticized foreign presence in this sensitive region, and said the region "must be immune from foreign military presence and weapons of mass destruction."

"Military presence of foreign powers, who have interests at variance with stability and long-term cooperation among regional states, cannot be conducive to achieving the common objective of securing the tranquility of this important waterway."

Velayati said that all littoral states of the Persian Gulf will be better served by joining hands in concerted effort to maintain peace and security in the region.

He said Iran fully supported the implementation of General Assembly resolution on the establishment of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the Middle East as a factor of stability for the region.

Velayati pointed out that the refusal of Israel to join the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) and put its "UN-safeguarded nuclear facilities" under the safeguard regime of the Vienna-based International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), has prevented the realization of the objectives of the Middle East nuclear free zone.

"In the Middle East, the Zionist entity, supported by certain powerful countries, continues its occupation of Palestine, parts of Syria and Lebanon, and persists on its policies of aggression, suppress of those who dare to express opposition to its illegal occupation, and violation of the very basic human rights of the Palestinian people," Velayati told the U.N. Assembly.

He said "the past experience and events of the last few years further illustrate the fact that the only viable option to return peace and security to the Middle East is one which is comprehensive and just, and which addresses the fundamental issues of the Palestinian question."

Towards the end of his address, the Iranian foreign minister expressed criticism of the failure of the international community to deal effectively with nuclear, chemical and conventional weapons, despite the modest progress made in this regard.

He held the arms producing countries for failure in this regard and said "the nuclear-weapon states should, as a first step. Prove their good faith by refraining from nuclear testing, and finalizing the comprehensive test ban treaty in 1996."

Iran, "inspired by the divine teachings of Islam" believes in the maintenance of peace and security at the national, regional and international levels, said Velayati, briefed on the progress achieved by the country in its post-war development plans.

He said in conclusion that "we spend only about one percent of our national budget on defense, and devote the rest to overhauling and strengthening our economic, social and cultural infrastructures."

Radio Discusses Velayati's UN Assembly Address

NC2609085495 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran First Program Network in Persian 0445 GMT 26 Sep 95

[Commentary by the News Research and Commentary Group]

[FBIS Translated Text] Foreign Minister Velayati addressed the UN General Assembly [UNGA] yesterday and described the Islamic Republic of Iran's views on international developments and on how to change the way in which the United Nations operates. He criticized the big powers' support for terrorism and double standards on the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction.

Twenty-one years ago Iran proposed that the Middle East be declared a nuclear-free zone. But this proposal fell on deaf ears, with the United States' support for the Zionist regime. Then the Islamic Republic of Iran gets accused of striving to acquire nuclear weapons. The Zionist regime reportedly has over 200 nuclear warheads. Undoubtedly, had it not been for the U.S. assistance, this regime could not have acquired these warheads.

Continuing his remarks, Velayati referred to the unjust and partial stances of the Security Council and stated that the Security Council, which represents all the members of the United Nations, should display the necessary political determination to fundamentally confront crises fairly, not grant preference to the interests of the [big] powers over the interests and choices of the majority, and to discharge its duties according to the Charter. If this is done there will be less domination by those few states that consider the UN's approach to issues part of the narrow framework of ensuring their own national rights.

The current UN General Assembly, which coincides with the 50th anniversary of the United Nations, is particularly important, because, as well as reviewing its past role, it will also include discussions on the need to change and improve the UN Charter. On the assembly agenda are: discussion of the authorities of the UN secretary general; the duties and responsibilities of the Security Council and the number of its permanent and nonpermanent members; the UN budget; the peacekeeping forces and the formation of a UN army; changes and amendments in the authorities of the Trusteeship Council and of the Economic and Social Council, which are two of the six pillars of the United Nations; as well as dozens of other issues that have prevented the UN's positive and effective operation for years. The Islamic Republic of Iran is participating in these discussions as one of the founder members of the United Nations and as one of the countries active in international affairs and that can propound fundamental issues through international coordination in the form of the Nonaligned Movement and the Organization of Islamic Conference—issues that correctly focus nations on the UN's weak points.

Military Chiefs Interviewed on Capabilities, Weapons

LD2109213395 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran First Program Network in Persian 0705 GMT 21 Sep 95

[Studio interview with Brigadier Heydari, deputy in charge of coordination of the Joint Staff of the Armed Forces; Brigadier General Habib Baqa'i, commander of the Air Force; Brigadier Ebadat, deputy commander of the ground forces; and Rear Admiral 'Abbas Mohtaj, deputy commander of the Navy, by unidentified correspondent; date not given; from 'This Week's Roundtable' program — recorded]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] [Correspondent] In the name of God, the merciful, the compassionate. Good day dear listeners. [passage omitted] Could I please ask Brigadier Ebadat to tell our listeners something about the current situation and activities of the Islamic Republic of Iran's ground forces.

[Ebadat] [passage omitted] We learned from the [Iran-Iraq] war that if we became dependent on foreign weapons and equipment, they [foreign powers] would not help us in a war in view of the political and other relations they have with each other and because they only work for the benefit of their own interests. We saw how they did not assist us in any way, but, on the contrary, they imposed economic and arms sanctions against us. We therefore have to rely on ourselves and even if we have to import some equipment, they have to be equipped with a technology which we are able to build ourselves. This is why, in accordance with the advice given by the commander in chief of the Armed Forces [Khamene'i], we began the task of manufacturing equipment, weapons, and armored vehicles and started work on the design of tanks. We were successful, God be thanked, and built a tank named Zolfaqar. This tank has had several years of experience in war and, God willing, when it reaches mass production, it will perhaps be the best tank in the world because it possesses all the good features of a tank.

[Correspondent] Brigadier Ebadat, this is exactly what I wanted to ask. In relation to the manufacture of this tank, have you had access to more sophisticated technology or not, and in this connection, have you reached mass production?

[Ebadi] Regarding sophisticated technology, we had the new Eastern tanks which we had took as booty from Iraq — we saw how Iraq performed during the war, and we ourselves were in possession of Western tanks. We saw all their performances and got to know what the features of a good tank were. This tank is short and has a big gun caliber and it will be the best tank as far as fire control, tracking equipment, and speed is concerned. We have built a limited number of this type of tank, we have tested it and fired from it and, God willing, once the credit for it has been secured, we shall reach mass production.

[Correspondent] Thank you very much. Allow me to ask the esteemed Commander of the Air Force Brigadier Baqa'i for his remarks about the achievements of the Air Force.

[Baqa'i] [passage omitted] Since the victory of the revolution, the Air Force has carried out its missions and duties in a perfect manner and with glory due to its special circumstances and capability. At present it has very good resources and military equipment. Our military equipment is among the world top military equipment. Research and studies which have been carried out on this equipment has been carried out by our own researchers using scientific research centers in universities. They have so far implemented around 300 research projects. Those which were required, according to their priorities, have been put into practice. The latest project which has been carried out by our men is to provide fuel [mid air refueling] to the MIG-29. This aircraft enhances the capability of the country's air defense. That is, instead of landing, the aircraft can fly for several hours in the sky and in the best manner defend the air space of our country, if needed or required. The Air Force enjoys a very high spirit and strong capability and is ready to serve the aims of the system and the noble people of Iran.

In addition to our combat activities, our pilots carry out flights to the deprived areas. Our engineers are taking part in the reconstruction process of the [military] bases and fulfil their duties. There are many examples but time does not allow us to mention them now. God Willing, we will mention them one by one some other time.

[Correspondent] Certainly. I want to ask Brigadier General Mohtaj to comment on behalf of the acting commander of the Navy of the Armed Forces of the Islamic Republic of Iran.

[Mohtaj] In the name of God, the merciful, the compassionate. [passage omitted] During the eight years of the holy defense, our armed forces managed to achieve faith and belief in their own abilities. It is with this faith that they are now moving toward full self-sufficiency. Fortunately, the navy has taken very positive steps toward self-sufficiency and has achieved capabilities both on the water surface and underneath. Of course, it was only recently that we were equipped with submarines and other underwater equipment. [passage omitted]

Although submarines are a new phenomenon in our navy, we have nonetheless managed to achieve good progress in this field. I hope that I will be able to provide other details, if necessary, on another occasion. [passage omitted]

[Correspondent] I would now like to ask Brigadier Ebadat to provide some details on the Babr-400 [Tiger-400] project.

[Ebadat] As I said earlier, we have to accomplish many tasks now that the war has ended. One of these is to review and then improve our hardware. One type of equipment we needed to address was our tank-carriers [tankbar]. As you know, no one was prepared to sell these to us, even though they were crucial for our war effort. Our existing tank-carriers were very old and had undergone lots of wear and tear, and some of them even dated back to the World War II. We modernized these and equipped them with good engines and motorized parts. Today, these can compete with their modern counterparts both in terms of speed and power. These have been tested and are currently being mass- produced. We hope that one day we will have a large number of tank- carriers, without having to resort to buy them from abroad again. [passage omitted]

Another topic concerns our military maneuvers and combat- readiness. As you are aware, at present about one-third of our forces are still on the border [with Iraq].

[passage omitted]

[Ebafdat] We still have one-third of our forces on the border. They are guarding the area and the traffic therein very well. On the other hand, in order to preserve our preparedness, we engage our remaining forces in maneuvers that take place under real war conditions, that is to say we use real live ammunition and the same intensity of fire that one can experience in a real war. All the personnel taking part in these maneuvers are in such a condition that should there be some confrontation, they are fully combat-ready and can fight very well. Our maneuvers themselves clearly show how combat-ready these forces are.

We have, furthermore, managed to repair many of the helicopters of our army aviation corps, despite all the damage they suffered during the war. We carried out OCM [last word in English] on all of these, that is to say we dismantled them and then put them together, so that they are now ready for combat. During the last two years, we have carried out OCM on 94 helicopters.

As you know, the army aviation corps continued to be very active even after the war and carried out many hours of flight, performing different tasks such as helping the victim of floods, earthquakes, or even fires, as was the case recently in the Golestan forest [northern Iran] blaze. These units have also been engaged in the campaign against smugglers, in particular in eastern Iran. This is because of the difficult terrain there, which makes it hard for the units of the Law Enforcement Force and the Islamic Revolution Guards Corps to set up ground bases in the desert areas. The army aviation corps has therefore been very active in this field and many of its personnel have been martyred in their endeavors. [passage omitted]

Another thing I want to tell our people is that today we only accept types of equipment that have undergone stringent tests. If we intend to buy something, we go for the best available type, so that they [arms supplying countries] are no longer able to sell us their rubbish.

[Correspondent] Thank you very much. Brigadier General Baqa'i; could you please tell us more about the Air Force's successes and its capabilities under the country's present circumstances.

[Baqa'i] The Air Force went through some rough times during the eight years of holy defense considering that we had economic blockades imposed against us. But the consequences of these pressures were that we started to be creative, to take initiatives, and to gain in confidence. Just as you are aware, our boys worked on great projects which are too numerous to go through in detail. One of these, for example, is the simulator [last word in English] which is an aircraft that takes a flight position on the ground and can rotate around three axes and the pilot also takes on a flight position on ground. Our boys hope to complete this project in a month or two and we hope to make good use of it in our training courses. This is one of our important achievements. These kinds of simulators cost three to four times more than an aircraft but our strugglers are in the process of completing this project. We have also worked on all kinds of electronic boards for inside the planes, inside our radars, and on various kinds of mechanical parts and tools and numerous such things [passage omitted]

[Correspondent] What is the combat strength of the Air Force right now and do we still have the same level of power and control we had during the war period or have these increased?

[Baqa'i] Of course there are two dimensions to this. As far as the operational dimension is concerned, I believe that, due to the many experiences we gained, the capabilities of our rank and file, personnel, and pilots are very high. Regarding facilities, we are currently making use of advanced equipment and facilities from both East and West and we hope, God willing, to make good use of them, practice with them, and maintain them so that if, God forbid, there is ever any need to use them in even the remotest parts of the Middle East region, we would be able to deliver our blows to the enemy. Our personnel — pilots and technical staff — are working round-the-clock to raise the level of our capabilities further.

[Correspondent] What about equipment?

[Baqa'i] As a whole and regarding the additional equipment we have acquired, we now have more and better quality equipment. For instance, the MiG-29 and Sukhoy-24 are the best aircraft around nowadays. We did not have an aircraft such as the Sukhoy-24 before which can cope with long flights. We are therefore enjoying fine and advanced equipment and our boys are now undergoing training with them.

[Correspondent] I would like to ask a question from General Mohtaj about the navy. Please tell us about your capabilities, technological achievements, and the issue of submarines which you briefly mentioned earlier on. Our listeners are very interested to know about your progress in these fields.

[Mohtaj] I should mention that various kinds of technology are used in the navy. All sorts of technology are used in the navy. A warship that goes to the sea is just like a city; it has all facilities needed in a city. [passage omitted]

Thanks to the efforts of the country's armed forces and industries, we have now managed to produce submarine batteries in the Islamic Republic. The first set of the batteries, which we needed to change after a period of three years, were replaced with the batteries which were made by ourselves. This is a source of pride for the country's industry, industry workers and us, as servants of the people, that the Islamic Republic of Iran's submarines are working with the batteries that were made in the Islamic Republic. [passage omitted]

[Correspondent] Thank you General Mohtaj for your comments. I repeat the question that I asked others. How do you explain our military capability in the Persian Gulf and the Caspian Sea?

[Mohtaj] The Islamic Republic of Iran has the longest borders with the Persian Gulf and our country is situated in a very sensitive geopolitical area. This is an advantage to us and provides us with a very good combat capability. [passage omitted]

Our capability in the Caspian Sea mostly concerns training and our bases and training centers are in the north. Our [activities] depend on the kind of policy the Islamic Republic adopts in the Caspian Sea and we will then follow suit.

[Correspondent] Thank you very much. Brigadier Heydari, what we'll be talking with you about in this opportunity, bearing in mind all that these gentlemen have been saying, is the Islamic Republic of Iran's Armed Forces Joint Staff and the new activities which it intends to undertake. We're waiting for you to say something on that.

[Heydari] First, among the questions which you put to the respected commanders of the forces there was one on comparing the combat capability in 1359 [year beginning 21 March 1980] and now.

[Correspondent] Yes.

[Heydari] Let me say this on that comparison — that taking the whole army into account, from the point of view of the personnel system and equipment and other resources which are effective in a war, it has the same resources plus the experience and the trial which we had in the field of faith as well as the reconstruction of the manpower. [passage omitted] That plus the self-sufficiency that we have achieved. When you compare 1359 with now, then we might even have been in need of a spare part which we would have to secure from the world arrogance before the Islamic Revolution. But now we are reliant on ourselves. A great percentage of the spare parts are made by the Forces and used by them. [passage omitted]

As for what the Joint Staff does in this field; on the whole, its task is to oversee the work of the Three Forces. As I said, we take the edicts of the exalted leader which have been issued in line with the tasks that have been allocated to the forces. We oversee the implementation of those tasks. Ultimately the Joint

Staff oversees the operational, logistics and research dimensions, and all other fields.

[Correspondent] Bearing in mind again what the commanders of the three forces of the Army have implemented, I'd like to ask you, in the manpower sector, is our combat capability in the army the same as it was during the holy defense period?

[Heydari] As for manpower, we mainly pay attention to quality. The exalted leader, in his guidelines delivered on 29 Farvardin [18 April] graciously said that we do not pay much attention to quantity, we consider the quality of the manpower. Therefore at the moment we consider the quality of manpower in line with the exalted leader's measure. [passage omitted]

The Army manpower at the moment enjoys high quantity and quality with regard to confronting the enemy's threats and, with the help of God's might, we have no problem in that regard.

[Correspondent] Let me ask this in another way. Is the level of training in our military academies higher compared with other world armies — those armies which count in the world — or the same; bearing in mind our experience of the eight years of holy defense?

[Heydari] We possess very high cultural centers in the Army. In the Academy of Strategic Sciences there is a doctorate level. There are the infantry and the Air Force academies and numerous cultural and training centers across the Three Forces. While we do not fall short of anything in the world, we are superior because of going through eight years of holy war. Others lack that experience. We have reviewed our curriculum and prepared them by incorporating the war experience for our cultural centers.

[Correspondent] Thank you. Brigadier Ebadat, may I ask you about a personnel carrier which has been made by the infantry? In fact it is yet another project which you have undertaken. Please tell us about that.

[Ebadat] Yes. As I said we are seeking self-sufficiency in all fields — as our brother, the acting Navy commander said. We have undertaken production in all fields. The Defense Ministry produces all types of equipment, mortars, multiple rocket launchers, and all our conventional weapons. We had a great need for tanks, personnel-carriers, helicopters, and tank carriers. The commander in chief gave guidelines and for the implementation of his order we pursued this matter and, as was said, were successful with regard to tanks. When, God willing, we bring that to mass production then perhaps the eyes of the world will be widened with surprise. The Cobra personnel carrier also has very good specifications; it may become the best. We have carried out preliminary tests. It can perform amphibious tasks quite well. It has a good height. It carries a good number of personnel. [passage omitted]

[Correspondent] Thanks very much. I would now like to ask Brigadier Baqa'i to tell us something very briefly about our pilot cadets.

[Baqa'i] In the past, the cadets used to be sent abroad at very expensive costs. However, with all the planning in recent years and the opening of the aviation university, where there are instructors who have gained valuable experiences during the course of holy defense and have actually experienced real combat ...[pauses]...A few years ago, when I myself was posted to a fighter base, I had the pleasure to work with these young personnel who had just graduated from our country's pilot training centers. I flew with them frequently and I am totally lost for words to describe them. Moreover, these young personnel are always improving, and this is because our youth are blessed with particular talents and abilities.

I can for instance say that a young cadet has to fly something like 200 hours, together with an additional 200 hours which has to be done in a fighter base. This however is probably equivalent to something like 700 to 800 flight-hours as carried out by our pilots in the past. This is because of the bravery and courage of their instructors, who provide them with high quality training.

God willing, if we can improve our equipment further, then we can even accept cadets from a number of regional countries. This has in fact already been proposed. Hopefully, with further improvement in our facilities, we can become a key center for aviation training in the Middle East. [passage omitted]

'Secret' Report Details Failure of Economic Plan

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27 Jul, 3 Aug 95

[27 Jul p 1]

[FBIS Translated Text] In a secret report to the Islamic Republic's high-ranking officials prepared early in the current solar Hejri year [1374, 21 March 1995 - 20 March 1996], a copy of which has been received at KEYHAN, economic experts enumerated the reasons for the failure of the "economic adjustment" program of Hashemi-Rafsanjani's government. This report states that one may not look at economic issues in isolation from their "requirements and preconditions." To put it more clearly, one cannot advance economic development until favorable and compatible political, judicial, and social circumstances are established.

The experts from the Plan and Budget Organization warn that economic problems cannot be solved by issuing guidelines, punishments and penalties, threats, and prison terms. Likewise, as long as Iran's relationships with the outside world are not "normal" and free of constant twists and turns, there will be no hope of successful implementation of the economic development program.

The report states that the United States is gradually driving the Islamic Republic into weakness, poverty, and inaction by applying "blows of opportunity," yet the president of the Islamic Republic has declared more than once that not only will U.S. sanctions not harm the republic, they will make it stronger.

The report states that one may not encourage employers to invest and increase production while at the same time subjecting them to a torrent of vilification in the mass media.

The report says that improper and uncoordinated policies have caused a large part of the capital of Iranian investors to be transferred to Dubayy, and this sheikhdom has become "an international center for Iran's private sector."

The first installment of this report, which will be printed in two installments, is on page 4.

[27 Jul p 4]

[FBIS Translated Text] Following the intensification of Iran's economic crisis in recent months, the Islamic Republic's economic policy, which had been officially designed along the lines of deregulation under the "adjustment" slogan, did a 180-degree turn and returned again to policies of administrative centralization. This reversal, which is most evident in the management of foreign exchange resources and price controls, was naturally met with opposition and resistance from the Islamic Republic's technocracy.

What follows are the major points in a report prepared early in the current solar year by the Plan and Budget Organization concerning the nation's general economic situation, which was given to the Islamic Republic's high level figures. An important point in this report is the warning from the Plan and Budget Organization's experts concerning the danger of returning to the policies of the past, and most important of all, their emphasis on the direct relationship between the nation's economic and political situations.

The experts from the Plan and Budget Organization first warn that problems such as inflation or the drop in the value of the rial arise from deep economic problems and that economic solutions must be used to deal with them: "With regard to the nation's economic problems, our usual approach has been to deal with the surface signs and indicators. Rarely do we give attention to the fact that problems such as inflation, increases in the foreign exchange rate, and increases in the price of gold are merely outward signs of very complex problems and phenomena operating at the heart of the economic system.

"In recent years, when these superficial factors have emerged, the usual practice has been to take various steps to eliminate the superficial signs, and naturally the effects have been short-term. As the factors, the public relations mechanisms, and the essential work remained in force, after a period of time these superficial indications such as the foreign exchange rate, the price of gold, and inflation reemerged, each time with greater dimensions."

Punishments and Threats

After this reasoning, the experts from the Plan and Budget Organization take up the issues of the day. They emphasize that one cannot wage war against inflation or protect the value of the rial with guidelines and orders: "The first step toward a true solution to these problems is to accept the point that a serious and principled approach must be taken to the essential and real manifestations of economic problems. Unfortunately, the point of view that an economic problem can be solved solely by issuing guidelines, approving various sanctions, threats, or imprisoning violators of guidelines and regulations has not produced satisfactory results, and the inefficiency of these procedures has been proven repeatedly."

The report from the Plan and Budget Organization then deals with the nation's foreign exchange problems, adding: "In recent years foreign exchange revenues from exports of oil and gas have been sharply restricted because in addition to the fluctuations in the price of oil on international markets and the decline in the buying power of the foreign exchange revenues from oil and gas exports, the nation's ability to increase exports of oil and its byproducts was limited because of the rapid growth in domestic consumption and the shortage of resources for investment in oil exploration and extraction.

"In the years 1361 - 1373 [21 March 1982 - 20 March 1995], the nation's per-capita foreign exchange revenues from oil and gas exports fell from $514.60 to $142.40 at fixed prices, and at the same time the government's duties and the extent of its involvement in providing various goods and services was increasing; consequently the government's financial need increased day by day."

Currency in Circulation and Inflation

The report from the Plan and Budget Organization then emphasizes the root causes of inflation. In the first stage it considers it to be the result of an explosion in the amount of currency in circulation. The latter phenomenon arises from the drop in the government's rial resources. This decline is sharply evident in the area of the tax system. The percentage of taxes compared to domestic GNP, which was 5.8 percent in the year 1361 [21 March 1982 - 20 March 1983], dropped to 4.7 percent in the year 1373 [21 March 1994 - 20 March 1995] (this is one of the lowest rates of all the countries in the world).

In other words, during this period the nation's tax system had no success raising the tax percentage. Consequently, the burden of meeting the expenses of the government and its affiliated organizations was imposed on the nation's monetary system.

Meeting the government's financial needs from banking system resources has caused currency in circulation to increase from 6.4 trillion rials [R] in 1361 to R60 trillion in 1372 [21 March 1993 - 20 March 1994]. During this period currency in circulation increased an average of 20 percent per year. From 1372 through 1373 [21 March 1993 -20 March 1995], about R24.2 trillion was added to the nation's currency in circulation, which was much greater growth than previous years.

The rapid growth in currency in circulation in the last two years is due to the coming due of short-term foreign exchange commitments, the change in the foreign exchange rate, and the failure to collect the difference in the foreign exchange rate from people who opened paper credit accounts. In addition to the fact that it sharply increased the nation's currency in circulation, the failure to implement a foreign exchange rate unification policy brought a significant windfall to those using 70-rial foreign exchange.

Due to the drop in the government's rial resources from gas and oil exports, the failure to meet financial needs through taxes, the increase in government sector expenses, and the consequent increased use of banking system resources to meet government expenses in recent years, there has been a sharp increase in currency in circulation. Consequently the conditions required for general price increases were created. The expectation that general price levels must be stabilized is thus unrealistic under such circumstances.

The Plan and Budget Organization's experts sav that to have an effect on the external manifestations of the economic crisis, especially price inflation and foreign exchange rate increases, the main economic variables, which are investment, national production, the tax system, management, domestic and foreign trade, and other things must be improved. They immediately add: Unfortunately, however, it is impossible to reverse this procedure. Administrative efforts to reduce prices have never produced the desired results, and occasional intervention in the market will never produce anything but short-term results. This has been tested over long years, and sufficient experimental and statistical information exists to show its inefficiency.

Clear Realities

The report from the Plan and Budget Organization then emphasizes several realities which are considered clear and writes that these realities are not taken into account in Iran:

- For consumption, there must be production
- Easy expenditures by public institutions by creating new money is very costly to the nation
- Social justice needs a more accurate definition

With regard to "social justice," the experts in the Plan and Budget Organization write that the following methods were used after the Islamic revolution to achieve this goal:

1. providing goods to everyone through ration coupons;

2. administrative efforts to keep prices down for all buyers;
3. payment of huge subsidies on many goods;
4. payments in money and goods to many groups in society, either directly or indirectly out of the government budget;
5. practical and verbal hostility toward wealthy people, industrial owners, merchants, and others like them.

The report from the Plan and Budget Organization adds: Naturally, to pursue these goals, one must turn to administrative mechanisms. This naturally provided a clear justification for expanding various government organizations and organizations affiliated with the government and was one of the reasons for growth in the public sector.

For example, items 1, 2 and 3 were of greater benefit to the prosperous and middle classes than society's weak classes. Contrary to the stated goal, since the payment of huge subsidies on the production of such goods as water, electrical power, gas, oil products, drugs, milk, bread, and other things was significant in creating currency in circulation and inflation, society's weak classes absorbed the damage and cost of this inflation.

Anti-Capitalist Slogans

The experts from the Plan and Budget Organization emphasize that the anti-capitalist slogans in effect made the nation's most active capitalist sector despair and avoid investing: In our country the belief was established that to protect society's poor, the wealthy people, those who create jobs, and the merchants must be reproached, lectured, and quarreled with!

In this regard two points were not taken into consideration. One was that contrary to the prevailing image, the more wealth that is accumulated in a society, the more it benefits the work force (including various levels of specialists), because each labor unit will be formed with greater investment, will have greater efficiency, and will produce a greater return for the work force.

Today in the advanced capitalist countries about 7 percent [as published] of national revenues is earned by the workers and about 15 percent is earned by capital owners (the rest goes to the owners of agricultural land and others). In our country the share of the labor force in national revenues is no more than 50 percent. To increase the earnings of the labor force, there is no alternative but to encourage the accumulation of capital.

A second point is that one can assume that those with wealth and those who earn significant incomes and are potentially able to invest also have intelligence and insight. Consequently, when these people see the quarreling and are faced with hostility, they will preserve their capital in the form of liquid instruments that can be converted quickly or in the financial markets of the Persian Gulf sheikhdoms and other countries. The result of this will be that the nation will be deprived of the fruits of productive and stable private sector investment.

The Plan and Budget Organization experts emphasized that the creation of a verbal atmosphere hostile to the owners of capital has contributed to the increase in the foreign exchange rate: There are various indications that the emirate of Dubayy has become a trade center for Iranian merchants. Many merchants and probably other individuals have kept their foreign exchange resources in that country, and in eventful times when decisions are being made that they expect will affect the security of capital and the preservation of wealth, they transfer it outside the country, mostly to Dubayy.

The fact that Dubayy has become an international trade center for the Islamic Republic of Iran's private sector has itself been a factor in the decline in the amount of foreign exchange being sold on Iran's market and by the nation's financial entities and has contributed to the increase in its price.

Requirements for Development

The Plan and Budget Organization's report states that the Majles, the government, and the institutions of the government of the Islamic Republic want economic development, but on the other hand they fight and oppose the requirements for development. In discussing these "requirements," the report emphasizes the prior needs of development and writes that "despite the need for attention to these things and their inevitability, it appears that there is not that much support and acceptance for them in some decisionmaking centers or in some centers that are influential in forming public opinion."

Among the "prior needs of development," the Plan and Budget Organization experts emphasize three major factors: Iran's political relations with the outside world, the availability of a suitable atmosphere for attracting technology and investment, and the depoliticization of management.

With regard to the Islamic Republic's diplomacy, the Plan and Budget Organization report clearly states that as long as an atmosphere of chaos prevails in Iran's political relations with the outside world, there can be no hope of developing the country: "To develop the country, there must be beneficial trade relations with the world. This is a necessity with a dual character. One side is our need to compensate for the loss in foreign exchange revenues from oil exports, and the other side is the reality that the various nations of the world consider the development of their export industries to be a requirement for the development of their countries because the ability to create the required conditions, to improve quality, to activate and increase the efficiency of domestic industries, and to improve and make progress with technology is established through competition on international markets."

The report adds: "If we accept the necessity to export goods, the next problem is that today it is not a simple thing to sell goods in the world. In addition to the necessity to establish the conditions for economic competition, the development of non-oil exports also needs political and diplomatic preparations.

"Today one of the most important responsibilities of the diplomatic organizations in countries is to create suitable conditions for trade. If our political relations with various countries are not based on mutual understanding and the elimination of disorder, the possibility of selling goods on the world's markets will be quite limited. Today our non-oil exports are about $4 billion annually. If we want to export $10 to $20 billion annually, naturally the existing diplomatic foundation is a very restrictive bottleneck.

"Another aspect of beneficial foreign trade is the purchase of intermediate and capital consumer goods at suitable prices under suitable conditions. If they sell goods to us at high prices, and if they do not make the financial and credit means and the other desired conditions available to us, our imports will be more expensive than they could be."

The report states: "It now appears that conditions are going to a point of no return and that the possibility of overcoming our bad differences of opinion and reducing the mutual hostility has become quite low. For its own benefit, the United States has darkened the political conditions pertaining to the Islamic Republic of Iran's relations with its Arab neighbors.

"In addition to that, it appears that the United States has been successful in imposing the conditions it desires on the Western nations, Japan, and some other countries for the purpose of limiting our trade, technical, and credit activities, and it is tightening the ring of economic and diplomatic pressure around us. The United States is clearly using its experience in the Cold War, which was successful, against us. It is highly likely that by applying permanent and continuous restrictions and delivering various opportunistic strikes, it will put us into a gradual cycle leading to fundamental weakness, poverty, and immobility."

The Plan and Budget Organization's experts warn the Islamic Republic's leaders that Iran's economic crisis is the result of the existing disturbances in this country's relations with foreigners and that if this situation continues, the economic crisis will intensify: "Clearly, the recent measures taken against the Islamic Republic of Iran and the horizon that can be seen for it based on existing international indications and experiences are profound.

"The decrease in foreign exchange revenues, the increased cost of dealing with the foreign diplomatic and military situation, along with the sharp increase in population and the annual influx into the job market of millions of young people during the period of the revolution for whom there is not that much possibility of creating productive work under the aforementioned conditions, along with the high consumer expectations, require that more careful thought be given to current and future conditions.

"The international confusion does not go unnoticed by the nation's investors, merchants, and other people, and as it increases, the departure of capital from the country accelerates. Generally in the past we have faced increases in the foreign exchange rate for this very reason under such circumstances."

Economics and Politics

Another prior need for development, in the view of the Plan and Budget Organization's experts, is the ability to transfer technology and capital with ease. They write that this matter also, "in addition to preparing domestic conditions for accepting foreign technology and investment, needs the creation of foreign conditions, to keep the transfer of investment and especially technology from facing obstacles."

The report from the Plan and Budget Organization stresses another prior need called management, and it implies that in the Islamic Republic, managers are chosen not on the basis of ability, skill, and education, but rather according to orthodox and ideological criteria. If a manager is chosen based on political relations, he does not make improving efficiency and advancing his organization the goal of his work. Instead, he is concerned with preserving the political conditions that brought him to power. Likewise, he does not feel that it is necessary to improve his individual abilities because this does not have that much to do with his appointment or dismissal.

Under such circumstances, a manager is questioned or dismissed only when he creates a political problem for his political supporters. Usually someone doing a legal investigation of violations by such people will face problems because they are supported by a political group or faction. Legal investigation or dismissals is not even that costly for this group of managers. People like this who use political channels to achieve what is usually achieved through decades of management experience, professional and specialist investment, and gradual progress through effort and struggle, are not in any danger, yet if the reverse of this procedure were employed, individuals would be appointed to management positions based on their personal competence and would be promoted based on an assessment of their efficiency. Managers like this would see their future and their destiny solely on the basis of proficient and desirable performance and would expend their energy on performing the duties in their domain of responsibility.

A very important point in the Plan and Budget Organization's report is the very clear emphasis on the political dimensions of economic development. The experts in this organization state clearly that meeting the prior needs of development is beyond the competence of economists and technocrats. It is within the purview of the nation's political leadership. In other words, they lay the blame for the nation's economic crisis on the political situation: "Meeting these prior requirements for development is within the competence and responsibility of the nation's political system. If these kinds of conditions cannot be met because of various matters of national interest, it is necessary to give attention to the fact that the nation's growth and development naturally must take place within the framework of inevitable limitations and that there will also be limitations on the ability to improve the public's standard of living and welfare. In cases such as this, it is more appropriate not to raise the nation's expectations and to make the people in society aware of the limitations that must be accepted to achieve other interests."

These artful statements, which must be understood in the context of the Islamic Republic by taking understandable considerations into account, can be translated as follows: As long as the nation's political situation continues on its present course, it is better not to discuss economic development!

[3 Aug p 4]

[FBIS Translated Text] Following the intensification of Iran's economic crisis in recent months, the Islamic Republic's economic policy, which had been officially designed along the lines of deregulation under the "adjustment" slogan, did a 180-degree turn and returned again to policies of administrative centralization. This reversal, which is most evident in the management of foreign exchange resources and price controls, was naturally met with opposition and resistance from the Islamic Republic's technocracy.

What follows below is part of a report prepared early in the current solar year by the Plan and Budget Organization concerning the nation's general economic situation, which was given to the Islamic Republic's high-level figures. An important point in this report is the warning from the Plan and Budget Organization's experts concerning the danger of returning to the policies of the past, and most important of all, their emphasis on the direct relationship between the nation's economic and political situations.

Continuing their report, the experts from the Plan and Budget Organization study the inception of the policy of "economic adjustment," its method of implementation, and its results. The policies that were implemented beginning in the year 1368 [21 March 1989 - 20 March 1990] under the name "economic adjustment" were designed with the goals of rebuilding and renewing the economic structure, improving confidence in the conditions for production and investment in the private sector, eliminating imbalances, the gradual elimination of inflationary pressures through price adjustments in guided stages, the achievement of a balanced budget, the creation of monetary stability, the creation of logical conditions for fluid and smooth domestic and foreign trade, reducing the size of the government sector, increasing the role of the public, and other things.

Contrary to Initial Goals

The Plan and Budget Organization's experts say that these polices "were sometimes implemented, and some of them also, for various reasons, were not implemented." In what areas did the economic adjustment fail, and what were the reasons for this failure? Among the instances of failure, the experts emphasized two very key cases: one is controlling currency in circulation and the other is unification of the foreign exchange rate. They say: "Growth in currency in circulation was not controlled, and consequently inflation continued. Due to various forms of resistance, the unification of the foreign exchange rate policy was undermined from the very beginning.

"The real price of foreign exchange (the market price) was not obtained from many government and nongovernment buyers of foreign exchange, and consequently the imbalance in the foreign exchange market continued. The various pressures created by excess demand caused the creation of foreign exchange commitments. At the same time, a huge amount of windfall revenues came to those using this type of foreign exchange or goods that came into the country through its use. The fact that the creation of a balanced foreign exchange market and a balanced and unified foreign exchange rate is necessary for sound performance in the economic system is affirmed by every informed economist.

"Other developing nations such as India, Pakistan, China, Thailand, Morocco, and others have been able to create such conditions, but for various reasons, attaining these necessary and sound economic conditions in our country met with resistance, opposition, management problems, and obstacles, and that necessarily led this situation in a different direction from the initial goals."

The report from the Plan and Budget Organization treats the Fourth Majles as a serious obstacle to Iran's economic reforms, and it considers its obstruction to be one of the main factors in the failure of the "adjustment" policy. The report states: "During the law-making period of the Fourth Majles, the idea was presented that the nation's economic problems may have been caused by implementation of the policies of economic adjustment! Unfortunately this idea is based on inattention to the realities and inattention to the basic problems and real damages that have beset the nation's economy, and inattention to the fact that it is unavoidably necessary to adopt gradual measures to repair the damage, rebuild, and find solutions.

"It was said that the government caused high prices because the economic council approved rate increases for some government goods and services. In this assessment the reality was denied that government organizations providing basic services did not cause the onset of inflation, but are instead at the end of the line. Many of the government companies and institutions producing useful goods and services were themselves victims of inflation, not the causes of it. Consequently, they constantly asked why the sellers, the 'causes of inflation,' were not dealt with. No attention was paid to the fact that price increases were caused by the annual increases of 20 to 30 percent in the volume of currency in circulation, while some individuals abused these conditions, or colluded and did other things to the detriment of society to benefit themselves. It must be noted, however, that punishing shopkeepers is punishing people who had no part in creating the roots of the problem and can have no role in solving it either."

Irreversible Course

The report from the Plan and Budget Organization adds: "It was thought that the price of foreign exchange was due to the activities of buyers and dealers in the streets and markets, the existence of free trade zones, border peddlers, and smuggled imports of goods, without taking into account the fact that real and per capita revenues from oil exports were decreasing 10 percent annually. This inevitably meant a drop in the foreign exchange supply and inflated prices, caused by increases in the various expenses borne by the public sector. Demand for foreign exchange inevitably increases, and if these two factors continue, the price of foreign exchange will also go up, like it or not.

"The price of foreign exchange on the free market is solely due to domestic inflation, and contrary to the repeated analyses of some organizations and individuals, it has no relationship and is not caused by brokers, importers, or the like. The reality was denied that brokers, middlemen, and smuggling are caused by the special conditions on the foreign exchange market and the way foreign trade is organized; they are not the cause of it.

"The great opposition from influential factions in the Islamic Republic to the main areas of the reforms ultimately put an end to the policy of economic adjustment." The authors of the report add that since the month of Shahrivar 1373 [23 August - 22 September 1994] the government took measures reversing the policies of adjustment and began new phases in the nation's economic activity.

What they mean by "reverse measures" is the government's initiatives to control the foreign exchange market and supervise prices, which began gradually in the second half of last year [23 September 1994 - 20 March 1995] and changed the focus of the nation's economic policy in the early months of 1374.

In view of this turnaround, the Plan and Budget Organization's report projects a dark future for the nation's economy. It says: "If the main currents and the roots of the nation's economic problems are not given attention and if decisive solutions are not pursued, the nation's current conditions show that existing trends could easily intensify and put the nation's economy on an unwanted course. For this reason it appears that we have before us a new round of inflation and consequently a continuous decline in the value of the nation's money, as well as continuous damage to the foundations of production and trade and a weakening of the nation's economic capability. If that happens, everything that was done in the last five years will easily be undone, and if these conditions continue for the next five years or so, that will put the nation's economy onto an irreversible course."

The authors of the report emphasize once more that there is "no middle road" for solving the problems of shortages and high costs, the drop in foreign exchange revenues, unemployment, and poverty. They accuse their rival factions of uprooting the "seedling of reforms," saying: "During the First Five-Year Plan, policies were adopted, some of which were implemented, and to whatever extent they were implemented they bore basic fruit. Due to precipitous expectations, however, instead of alleviating weaknesses and reinforcing areas of strength, a few people, by applying various forms of pressure, began to uproot the new seedlings. Naturally, this will result in continued and deepening economic problems."

The Plan and Budget Organization report points an accusing finger at the "huge government and foundation monopolies," charging that they disrupted the cycle of reforms to protect their own massive interests: "The big government monopolies and foundations have come into the picture with access to below-market foreign exchange rates and with administrative and political support, and they are driving the private popular sector out of the picture more than ever. Moreover, the small business private sector will face even more difficult conditions.

"Neither in our country nor anywhere else has a government economy been able to bring economic salvation. This is another lesson that is being ignored. On the other hand, returning to subsidies, government distribution, and the like will consume more foreign exchange resources and reinforce the consumer habits and expectations that have been created. These damaging measures will weaken economic conditions. The growth in population and the increase in the number of people looking for work have exacerbated this cycle in various ways, and the rial expenses among other things will perpetuate this trend. The inability of the tax system to obtain sufficient revenues to meet expenses, which are necessary to continue with this procedure, will create visible and hidden budget deficits. Budget deficits and the imposition of expenses on the Central Bank will bring increased currency in circulation and higher prices.

"At the same time, two years from now the notes will come due on our foreign credit transactions, and this will aggravate the foreign exchange shortage. The bottom line is that the outward manifestation of this will be a new round of rapid inflation the like of which our country has not seen since World War II."

What Must Be Done?

The final section of the Plan and Budget Organization's report is allocated to a study of ways out of the crisis, but the solutions presented go no further than what has been tested during the last six years. In the structure of the Islamic Republic, the technocracy does not do very much. The authors of the report also ignore their previous analysis about the tight relationship between the economic and political dimensions and confine themselves to recommending a series of technical solutions, but are they capable of doing anything more?

The recommendations from the Plan and Budget Organization's experts revolve around eight major areas:

1. Efforts to control inflation: "All the pillars of government, including the political managers in the executive power such as the respected ministers, must initiate a comprehensive and serious ethical and political campaign to work on economizing, reducing expenses, eliminating excessive organizations, dissolving parasitic, unprofitable, and unnecessary companies, and other things."

In this regard the experts from the Plan and Budget Organization emphasize a comprehensive phenomenon called "company management." They write: "Unfortunately most of the ministries are responsible for company management activities. Talk has also begun to emerge about company management in the nation's universities.

"Along with the ministries and with the exception of credit activities, the banks also should avoid any kind of economic activity such as building construction, the buying and selling of buildings, factory and hotel construction, commercial affairs, and similar things, and they should stop all their other irrelevant and losing activities. The same applies to the organizations, retirement funds, and other financial entities. It is also essential that these organizations stop spending public resources on projects, programs, industries, and companies that will not produce any known results and which have already put them into unsuitable financial circumstances."

2. Revision of market organization procedures: The report from the Plan and Budget Organization emphasizes once more that it will be possible to stabilize prices only by stabilizing the volume of currency in circulation. If currency in circulation is on the increase, administrative control of prices will not have positive results, on the one hand because it will not solve the main root of the problem, which is this very growth in currency in circulation, and on the other hand because it will put pressure on producers, thereby causing additional problems.

Of course the Plan and Budget Organization report accepts the fact that some sellers sell undesirable goods without guarantees or at above-market prices, but it immediately adds that the solution to this problem, "as in many other countries, depends on passing consumer rights laws and organized enforcement of those laws."

Here the Plan and Budget Organization experts take the opportunity to criticize the "Government Penalties Organization." They write: "After two years of expert work by a group of lawyers and economists and a study of consumer rights legislation in other countries, a bill for this purpose was prepared by the Plan and Budget Organization and presented to the respected Council of Ministers in 1371 [21 March 1992 -20 March 1993]. After the relevant discussions, this bill was presented to the Majles with amendments, but the debate on it was prolonged for various reasons in the Commerce Commission and then suddenly instead of an enforceable law that stipulates consumer rights, another government penalties law was presented."

3. The adoption of a foreign exchange policy based on facilitating exports and imports: The authors of the report from the Plan and Budget Organization sharply criticize controlling the foreign exchange rate, regarding it as a factor that undermines and confuses the nation's economy: "The sale of foreign exchange at below-market prices and at export and import rates is disruptive, while the nation's economic advancement depends on ease and fluidity in non-oil exports and on importing goods to match the exports."

The aforementioned report says that in today's conditions the goal must not be to set the foreign exchange rate, but rather attention must be given to this "ease and fluidity of exports and imports in the framework of appropriate customs regulations."

4. The use of similar management, financial, accounting, and supervisory laws, rules, and regulations for all public sector organizations.

5. The stabilization of salaries, wages and benefits for a period of one or two years: The exports from the Plan and Budget Organization say that if "wages, salaries, benefits and the like increase 20 percent per year for example, while national production only increases 5 percent per year, the increase in wages and salaries in excess of the increase in production will only cause prices to rise."

6. Revising the structure of the industrial sector: The report from the Plan and Budget Organization adds that in many areas Iran's industrial sector "has not been that successful at this time, despite all the attention, the direct and indirect aid, the heavy customs support, and its access to significant amounts of foreign exchange. If this continues, in the years to come imports of industrial products will continue, and one of the major sources of demand for foreign exchange will remain in place as before."

7. Changes in the tax system: "In conditions where revenues from exports of the nation's oil and gas are declining, it will not be possible with this tax system to procure the financial resources needed for the government to continue providing goods and services."

8. Reform of the country's banking and credit network system: This system "does not have adequate prerogatives in the area of using monetary instruments. Moreover, the profit rate on banking means is lower than the inflation rate, and the savings accounts in the banking network are not competitive with the foreign exchange and gold markets for collecting the public's currency in circulation. The nation's banking system uses old procedures, supervisory control over the nation's banking system is not being done effectively, and finally, the banks are involved in many non-banking activities such as company management, construction, and other things. It will be necessary to solve all these problems to improve conditions in the nation's monetary and banking system."

It appears essential to implement the recommendations in the report from the Plan and Budget Organization to deal with the problems of a developing economy, but the experience of contemporary history shows that the phenomenon of development cannot be studied solely from the technical and expert standpoint. In this regard, Iran's experience is an expensive lesson.

From the overall Plan and Budget Organization report, it appears that the reforms sought by supporters of "economic adjustment" have failed due to a collision with the "vice regency of the chief jurisconsult." What can be done? Some political-ideological structures are incompatible with the phenomenon of reform!

Nepal

Radio Reports on Swearing In of New Ministers

LD2209152095 Kathmandu Radio Nepal in English 1415 GMT 22 Sep 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] In the presence of his majesty the king, Prime Minister Sher Bahadur Deuba administered the oath of office and secrecy to 15 ministers (?at a ceremony held) [words indistinct] at the Royal Palace today. At the same function [words indistinct] chairman, Dhanendra Bahadur Singh administered the oath of ex-officio membership of the [words indistinct] standing committee to the newly appointed ministers. Prime Minister Sher Bahadur Deuba administered the oath of office and secrecy to the [word indistinct] ministers of state [words indistinct].

Report on Appointment of New Council of Ministers

BK2509064195 Kathmandu THE KATHMANDU POST in English 23 Sep 95

[Unattributed report — received via Internet]

[FBIS Transcribed Excerpt] Kathmandu (RSS) — His Majesty the King has, in accordance with the Constitution of the Kingdom of Nepal-1990 and on the recommendation of the Prime Minister, expanded the present council of ministers constituted under the chairmanship of Prime Minister Sher Bahadur Deuba on September 12, 1995 and allocated the portfolios. This is stated in a notice issued Friday [22 September] by the Principal Press Secretariat of His Majesty the King. The new council of ministers constituted under Prime Minister Deuba has 19 ministers, one minister of state and five assistant ministers. [passage omitted]

His Majesty the King has expressed the hope that the new council of ministers will receive necessary cooperation from everyone in works aimed at the welfare and progress of Nepal and the Nepalese people.

Meanwhile, Prime Minister Sher Bahadur Deuba in the presence of His Majesty the King administered the oath of office and secrecy to 15 ministers amid a ceremony held at the Narayanhity Royal Palace on Friday.

At the same function Raj Parishad standing committee chairman Dhanendra Bahadur Singh administered the oath of ex-offico membership of the Raj Parishad standing committee to the newly appointed ministers.

Also on the same day, Prime Minister Sher Bahadur Deuba administered the oath of office and secrecy to newly appointed ministers of state and assistant ministers at his office in Singha Durbar.

Report on Outline of New Coalition's Policy Goals

BK2509065195 Kathmandu THE KATHMANDU POST in English 22 Sep 95

[Report "by a Post Reporter" — received via Internet]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Kathmandu — Promotion of nationalism, consolidation of democracy and protection of the best interest and prosperity of Nepal and Nepali people are to be the policy base of the newly formed coalition government.

According to policy outlines as put forward through the Royal address at the joint sitting of both the Houses of Parliament Thursday [21 September], His Majestys Government will remain effortful to reach consensus on national issues while initiating mutual goodwill, coordination and understanding with all political parties.

The policy document describes villages as the focus of development and says that the basic objective of the coalition government will be to raise the living standard of the poor, destitute and backward people. In this regard concrete steps will be taken to provide basic facilities such as drinking water, health, education, rural transportation and electrification.

The policy paper also lays emphasis on devising a just land reform programme, irrigation extention, supply of agricultural inputs as well as extension of small and medium scale cottage industries.

In economic and financial sector the policy paper aims at righting distortions, deviations and challenges that have recently appeared in the national economy. The document also says that the government will lay emphasis on overall economic stability, sustainable economic development and financial equilibrium maintaining transparency on government expenditure.

On the policy of investment, the document says that His Majestys Government will discourage the attitude of scattering scant sources without study and preparation. Similarly government investment will be directed towards sustainable and feasible projects.

Defining the governments industrial policy, the Royal address says that the government will pursue an open and liberal industrial policy encouraging private sector on the basis of competition, efficiency and excellence. On tourism sector, policies will be devised so that different parts of the country will reap benefits from this sector.

The government's policy document lays emphasis on promotion of export at the same time taking strong measures to stop the foreign currency deflection by misusing the open policy. Regarding transport sector His Majestys Government will pay special attention to repair and maintenance of highways and link roads with equal emphasis on speedy execution of incomplete projects and the needs of hill districts that are so far deprived of road transportation. In the field of development of water resources the government will pursue a policy of mobilizing internal resources as well as the foreign aid. The government will bring forward short-term and long-term programmes to relieve the uncertain ties created in the energy sector due to the cancellation of Arun III [hydroelectric project].

According to the policy document, the government will embark upon plans to increase the flow of resources to the poor and destitute, to solve the problems of landless farmers and bonded labourers.

On environmental aspect, the government policy paper envisages a concrete programme to contain pollution in Kathmandu Valley and avoid mismanagement in the field of urban settlement. Special programmes are to be initiated to keep religious rivers like Bagmati and Bishnumati pollution free.

Appropriate educational programmes are to be pursued to encourage administrative, educational and financial decentralisation in higher education structure with special emphasis on developing capabilities and excellence of academic institutions.

As outlined in the policy, the government will initiate steps to develop the government media as free, fair and dependable national communication system and encourage participation of private sector in the development of communication. Policies will be formulated to maintain dignity, freedom and development of the fourth estate. The policy paper expresses the commitment of the government to keep the administrative machinery free from party politics, while emphasing, impartiality and efficiency of the administration.

The policy paper also touches the citizenship issue and says that legal and pragmatic arrangements will be made to provide citizenship certificates in an easy and simple manner to all citizens born and residing in Nepal.

Finally the policy document of the government expresses commitment to protect the dignity and freedom of judiciary, brings forth special programmes comprising monthly allowance to the senior citizens, handicapped and disabled and envisages free medical services, education and employment opportunities.

Earlier, His Majesty the King was welcomed by the Speaker of the House of Representatives Ram Chandra Paudel and the Chairman of National Assembly Beni Bahadur Karki upon his arrival to the parliament building to address the joint sitting of Parliament.

Report Views New Finance Minister's Austerity Plan

BK2509065095 Kathmandu THE KATHMANDU POST in English 23 Sep 95

[Report by Suman Pradhan — received via Internet]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Kathmandu — The countrys economy, which the new government says has been in a free fall due to the UMLs [United Marxist-Leninist] uneconomic policies, is now headed for a round of painful restructuring. The restructuring process, which would include a host of austerity measures, is a must to jump start the ailing economy, says Ram Sharan Mahat, the new Finance Minister in the Sher Bahadur Deubas coalition cabinet. The government aims to concentrate more on increasing revenue collection through changes in the tax structure and giving a much needed boost to exports, and to keep a wary eye on where that revenue is spent. But to increase the flow of resources, austerity measures are needed. Austerity is required if we are to bring the country back to fiscal discipline, Mahat told The Kathmandu Post early Friday [22 September] during a brief interview at his Bansbari residence immediately after his appointment was made public. I am aware that such measures would require strict discipline which will be unpopular. But what needs to be done is to be done. A finance minister cant be both popular and a disciplinarian, he said.

Clearly, the topmost priority of the new government is to start dismantling the economic edifices of the UML government which concentrated more on welfare oriented socialist economy, and to introduce free-market policies through fiscal discipline — the buzz word these days. Mahat says the nine-month period of UML rule has been a nightmare for the economy. To support his argument, the tall, bearded minister read a bevy of economic data recently released by Nepal Rashtra Bank [Central Bank].

During the one month period of Srawan last year, export went up by 48 percent, revenue collection rose by 27.3 percent, and foreign exchange earnings hit Rs [rupees] 34.75 billion. But during the same period this year, exports were down to 20 percent, revenue collection rose at a sluggish pace of only 14.6 percent and forex reserves stood at Rs 32.26 billion, he said.

The finance minister, however, says despite the needed austerity measures, the UMLs popular village oriented programs would be spared the axe.

Personally, I dont think their Build Your Village Yourself [BYVY] program was bad. But it needs to be reformed, refocussed. The modalities of implementation ought to be strengthened, he said.

BYVY, as implemented by the UML was more supply oriented, says Mahat and adds, the program should cater to the actual needs of the villages. The local elected bodies at the village level should play a greater role in identifying the needs and controlling the purse strings. At the moment, Mahat says his first priority would be to draw a full fledged budget to be introduced in parliament soon.

Among the likely new measures, the coalition government is certain to proceed ahead with privatization which has been stalled, and is also sure to move ahead with Value Added Tax (VAT), a baby of the earlier NC [Nepali Congress] government but set aside by the communists. We will certainly bring VAT, but I have to see at what level of preparation VAT is at the moment, Mahat said.

Asked why the policy announcement contained in the royal address failed to mention the governments intention to revive Arun III [hydroelectric project], Mahat replied, We dont want to announce anything formally unless we are certain of the outcome. But we will make all efforts to bring it back.

The finance minister said he will be in a position to say more on Arun after his trip to Washington in early October to participate in the World Banks [WB] board of governors meeting. Mahat is also scheduled to meet the WB president on October 8.

Pakistan

Indian Reaction to U.S. Move Termed 'Unwarranted'

BK2509154195 Islamabad Radio Pakistan Network in English 1400 GMT 25 Sep 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] A Foreign Office statement in Islamabad said the equipment which is likely to be released due to the passage of the Brown Amendment by the American Senate in no way affects the military balance with India, which has overwhelming military superiority. This fact, the statement said, has also been confirmed to the Congress by the Pentagon as well as the State Department. The equipment to be returned comprises that which had been embargoed in 1990. The Indian reaction is, therefore, uncalled for, it added.

Pakistan expressed surprise at the totally unwarranted strong reaction by India over the passage of Brown Amendment and the illogical claim that release of equipment to Pakistan will generate an arms race in South Asia and compel India to deploy the [short range surface-to surface] Prithvi missile. The statement said that India has gone ahead with the production of short and intermediate nuclear capable missiles. The Prithvi, which can target most of Pakistan, has undergone trials and is in the process of being deployed. Pakistan on the other hand shares U.S. concerns regarding missile proliferation in South Asia. We have responded positively to the U.S. initiatives on South Asian missile control as well as mooted our own proposal for the creation of a zero missile zone in the region. India's intentions can be seen from the fact that it has responded to neither to these proposals.

Bhutto Speech at Beijing Women's Conference

BK2209060495 Islamabad THE PAKISTAN TIMES in English 5 Sep 95 pp 1, 9

[APP report: "PM for World Free of Women Exploitation"]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Beijing, Sept. 4 — Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto today called for shaping a world free from exploitation and maltreatment of omen — where they could have honour and dignity — and be equal partners in peace and development.

Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto received a standing ovation from thousands of delegates as she made the opening speech at the conference, which will last till September 15.

In her opening address as a special guest speaker at the United Nations Fourth World Conference on Women here, she said: "This conference must express its complete solidarity with our sisters and daughters, who are victims of armed conflict, oppression, and brutality."

"Their misfortunes must be our first priority," she said alluding to the use of rape as a weapon of conflict, and an instrument of "ethnic cleansing" in different parts of the world, including Occupied Kashmir and Bosnia. The prime minister said such crimes against women were most reprehensible, and their enormity dwarfed other issues relating to women, urgent though they were.

"The end of the cold war should have ushered in peace and an era of progress for women. Regrettably, the proliferation of regional tensions and conflicts have belied our aspirations. As in the past women and girls have again been the most direct victims of these conflicts — the most helpless, and thus the most abused," the prime minister said.

Benazir Bhutto envisioned a world in which women have opportunities to rise to the highest level in politics, business, diplomacy, and other spheres of life — where they would have economic freedom and independence, and could be equal partners in peace and development. "In short, a world committed to free markets as to women's emancipation, and not a world of battered women," she said.

"Let us translate this vision into reality in the shortest possible time," she added.

Ms. Bhutto said this conference needs to chart a course that can create a climate where the girl child is as welcomed and valued as a boy child, that the girl is considered as worthy as a boy child.

She described the Fourth World Conference on Women as a "truly historic occasion, when some 40,000 women have assembled here to demand their rights, to secure a better future for their daughters, to put an end to the prejudices which still deny so many of us our rightful place in society."

"On this solemn occasion, I stand before you not only as a prime minister, but as a woman and a mother — a woman proud of her cultural and religious heritage."

As the first elected head of an Islamic nation, she felt a special responsibility towards women's issues and toward all women. She said "as a Muslim woman, I feel a special responsibility to counter the propaganda — that Islam gives women a second class status. This is not true."

Benazir Bhutto said the fact that there were three elected prime ministers in the Muslim world had destroyed the myth that a woman's place was in the house, and it was shameful or dishonourable, or socially unacceptable for a Muslim woman to work.

"Our election has given women all over the Muslim world moral strength to declare that it is socially correct for a woman to work, and to follow in our footsteps as working women and working mothers."

The prime minister mentioned the first-ever conference of women parliamentarians of Muslim world, held in Islamabad a month ago. "Never in the history of Islamabad so many working women and elected representatives gathered together at one place to speak in one voice," she said.

Today, the prime minister said she felt the same sense of pride about the Beijing conference, where women across continents had gathered together in search of self-esteem and respect in society.

"In distinguishing between Islamic teachings and social taboos, we must remember that Islam forbids injustice — injustice against people, against nations, against women." In fact, Islam treats women as human beings in their own rights, not as chattels. A woman can inherit, divorce, receive alimony and child custody. Women are intellectuals, poets, jurists and even took part in war, she said.

She referred to the Quranic verses about the wisdom of the Queen of Sabah (Bilqees), who had turned her country into a land of plenty.

"The Holy Prophet (Peace Be Upon Him) himself married a working woman. And the first convert to Islam was a woman Bibi Hazrat Khadija," the prime minister said.

Mohtarma Benazir added: Prophet Muhammad (Peace Be Unto Him) emphatically condemned and put an end to the practice of female infanticide in pre-Islamic Arabia.

The prime minister recalled that when she was chairperson of South Asia Association of Regional Cooperation,it had declared 1989 as the year of the girl child. Yet, six years later, the girl child's vulnerability continues, she added. "And it continues, not because of religion in the case of Pakistan, but because of social prejudice. The rights Islam gave Muslim women have too often been denied. And women are denied rights all over the world, whether developed or developing."

All over the world women are subjected to domestic violence, the prime minister said. "Often a woman does not walk out for she has nowhere to go. Or, she stays and puts up with domestic violence for the sake of her children," added she.

"We in Pakistan have started a public awareness campaign against domestic violence through the mass media to inform women that domestic violence is a crime and to alert men that they can be punished for it," she said.

"Often, women, in many a society are tortured, not only by men, but by women in-laws too, for financial benefits from the women's family. Sometime a wife is killed by her husband or in-laws so that they can gain another wife and more dowry."

Benazir Bhutto said dowry system was a social ill against which "we must raise our voices and create greater awareness."

She said today more women than men suffer from poverty, deprivation, and discrimination. Half a billion women are illiterate. Seventy per cent of the children, who are denied elementary education are girls.

"In Pakistan, we are concentrating on primary education for girls to rectify this imbalance," Ms. Bhutto said, adding women teachers were trained, and avenues of employment were being opened for women."

"It is my firm conviction that woman cannot ultimately control her own life and make her own choices unless she has financial independence. A woman cannot have financial independence if she cannot work."

The prime minister expressed her conviction that poverty, squalor, illiteracy and superstition could be done away with by investing in women and giving them opportunities to work.

She added: "the discrimination against women can only begin to erode when women are educated and women are employed. If my father had not educated me or left with independent financial means, I would not have been able to sustain myself or to struggle against tyranny or to stand here before you today as a special guest speaker."

If the girl child is to be valued, if the wife is to say "no" to domestic violence, then we owe a special obligation to creating jobs for women, the prime minister said.

She mentioned the setting up of the Women's Bank in Pakistan in 1989, which is run by women for women to aid and assist women in setting up their own enterprises to gain financial independence.

The prime minister thanked the government and the people of China for hosting the conference, and extending warm welcome and gracious hospitality.

She also paid warm tributes to the Secretary-General of the United Nations, Mr. Butrus Butrus-Ghali, and the Secretary General of the Conference, Mrs. Gertrude Mongella, for their tireless efforts in organising the World Conference on Women.

Altaf Group 'First Rank Terrorists' Said Eliminated

BK2409112795 Islamabad Radio Pakistan Network in English 1100 GMT 24 Sep 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] The interior minister, Mr. Nasirullah Khan Babar, has said first rank terrorists of [Muhajir Qaumi Movement] Altaf Group have almost been eliminated and rest of them are now losing ground in Karachi. He was addressing a news conference in Karachi today. The interior minister said so far about 300 to 400 terrorists of all ranks have either been arrested or killed and an equal number of them are yet to be nabbed. He also pointed out that the communication network of Altaf Group has already been broken with the ban on mobile telephones and pagers. He observed that the people were now being relieved of the fear of lawlessness and most of the city remained open for normal business. He said that the people were cooperating with the law enforcing agencies in dealing with terrorism and soon the city will be free from terrorist activities.

Further on Minister's Remarks

BK2609081195 Islamabad THE NEWS in English 25 Sep 95 pp 1, 10

[Report by Ilyas Khan]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Karachi — The government is collecting evidence to back the warrants it had issued for the Interpol to arrest and deport MQM-A [Muhajir Qaumi Movement-Altaf] chief Altaf Hussain.

At a press briefing held at the State Guest House here Sunday [24 September], federal minister for interior, Gen (Rtd) Nasirullah [Khan] Babar, said the relevant authorities had desired that 'positive' evidence be furnished in support of the warrant, and the government are collecting documents and other evidence accordingly.

Babar reiterated his position visa-vis the Muhajir community which, he said, was not synonymous with the militants of MQM. He did not agree with a questioner that people in Karachi felt "alienated", asking what would happen if he ordered total withdrawal of Rangers and the police from the streets of the city.

To a question, he said that the militants were learnt to have told the MQM high command that in the event of a strike, they could only take responsibility for Karachi Central, that too if re- enforcements were available from Karachi East and West.

He said after the removal of 400 hardcore terrorists from the scene, either through death or arrest, some 400 to 500 armed militants were left active in the field, and they were mostly third- rank activists who, until recently, had been taking orders from localised ring leaders.

He disclosed the government had information that a certain arms consignment had been received by the militants, but they were not able to distribute these arms due to lack of proper communication. "The government are keeping a track of it, and hope to bust the consignment soon".

To another question, Babar said there was no restriction on MQM-A to hold public meetings, but there should be no display of arms. To further questions he said the government had the right and the responsibility to arrest persons from such a meeting who were wanted in criminal cases.

He criticised MQM-A's strategy of strike, saying they should start holding public meetings to display their popularity. "Strikes only affect their own voters", he said, adding that the impact of strikes was gradually shrinking to Karachi Central.

He said that maintenance of law and order was only one aspect of the strategy to tackle the Karachi issue. "There is a socio- economic and a political dimension also, and that would mean a long- term policy of social development, some components of which are already being put in place", he added.

About the security arrangements to combat MQM strikes, Babar said in order to avoid duplication and overlapping, the idea of joint responsibility of the Rangers and the police for law and order had been dropped. "In the recent strike two districts were assigned to the police, and three to the Rangers for this purpose, and the result has been positive", he said.

To a question about the expected length of stay of the Rangers in Karachi, Babar ruled out the possibility of withdrawal of Mehran Rangers, because they have been raised for Karachi, just as Frontier Constabulary for the NWFP [Northwest Frontier Province].

He dispelled the impression that the police in Punjab was pursuing a conscious policy to victimise travellers from Karachi, saying this could be simple disinformation. He invited the journalists to travel to Punjab by train on government expense and see for themselves if it was true.

When asked why the MQM detenues were not being produced in the courts, Babar said it would be done after their challans [criminal cases] are fully investigated. He said every one of them had given long lists of persons involved in criminal acts, and when all the persons mentioned in a single challan had been made available, the challan would be placed before a court of law.

He also denied that the government was instigating linguistic riots in Karachi, saying he was on record having appealed against a linguistic flare-up on many occasions in the recent past.

Later Nasirullah Babar showed to the newsmen the 15 mobile radio sets which he said were recovered from a house in Karachi Central. The Malaysian made two-way Model 148GTL sets had cost approximately Rs [rupees] 80,000 apiece, he opined.

"We had the information that the sets might be coming in either from Dubai or Singapore, but we couldn't intercept them", he said. He claimed that the sets were later located and seized on the receipt of inside information.

The sets, he said, could be tuned to 42 different frequencies which made them harder to get caught. He also distributed to the newsmen the copies of a set of codes seized along with the sets which could convey thirteen basic messages in numerical form.

He said MQM-A was planning to use three sets each in the five districts of Karachi, and supplement them with short-range walkie- talkies to re-establish their communications network.

Babar denied that someone from within the government ranks was guiding MQM-A in the use of sophisticated equipment and code systems, but he said someone from India might be doing it.

Radio Reports on Karachi Peace Talks, Strike

BK2109162095 Islamabad Radio Pakistan Network in Urdu 1500 GMT 21 Sep 95

[FBIS Translated Text] The third session of the ninth round of talks between the government and the Altaf Group on restoring peace in Karachi was held in Islamabad this afternoon. The session lasted two and half hours with the two sides agreeing to meet again in Islamabad on 26 September. Briefing newsmen, Professor N.D. Khan, the government negotiating team leader and law minister, said that the foremost priority was to normalize the situation in Karachi and that his team conveyed its concern to the Altaf Group over the group's call for strikes and its effects. He said that the call for strikes affects the talks and that today's talks were mainly devoted to reviewing the situation. He said that despite this, it is still his endeavor to hold extensive talks on all issues in order to arrive at a final settlement on restoring peace in Karachi.

Replying to a question, Khan said that he was very concerned about the loss of life and property as a result of these strike calls, adding that during the talks his team also took note of the Altaf Group's reservations. He expressed the hope that a path will be found so the calls for strikes can be avoided. However, he made it clear that the losses of life and property caused by these strike calls affect the talks.

Ajmal Dehlvi, the Altaf Group team leader, said that his position on strike calls is very clear and he would like the other side to remove the causes of their grievances. If these causes were removed, there would be no need for observing a strike. He acknowledged that some complications certainly emerge during the talks as a result of the strike calls. He said that his team is committed to continuing efforts to remove these complications. He said that he has given some proposals to the government on formulating a mechanism to remove grievances and avoid calls for strikes in the future.

A partial strike was observed in Karachi today in response to a call by the Altaf Group. Most of the markets and business establishments except in District East and South remained closed. Public and private vehicles plied in the city, however, the traffic was thin. ASSOCIATED PRESS OF PAKISTAN reports that eight people, including a girl, were killed and 13 were injured in incidents of shooting and violence in various parts of the city. Nearly 15 vehicles were set ablaze.

A press note says that the general law and order situation in Hyderabad remained normal today. A partial strike was observed in the city in response to a call by the Altaf Group. Firecrackers were burst in some places and miscreants tried to burn tires on streets, however they fled when police arrived on the scene.

Minister Said Hopeful Over Talks With MQM

BK2309162495 Islamabad Radio Pakistan Network in Urdu 1500 GMT 23 Sep 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Federal Law Minister N.D. Khan has said that he is hopeful about the 10th round of talks between the government and the Muhajir Qaumi Movement [MQM] Altaf Group to establish peace in Karachi. The talks will begin in Islamabad on Tuesday [26 September].

Addressing a news conference in Abbottabad, he said the government is working to normalize the situation in Karachi on a priority basis. He said the government's 21-points are based on the restoration of peace and tranquility in Karachi. N.D. Khan stressed the need to end forthwith the strike appeals by the Altaf Group. He said these appeals affect the cordiality that has been created between the two sides during the negotiations. The law minister said India's involvement in the situation in Karachi cannot be ignored, as it has always tried to divert attention from its brutal acts in occupied Kashmir. Criticizing the opposition, he said it is playing a negative role and wants to reap political benefit from the tragic situation in Karachi.

Sri Lanka

Government Imposes Censorship on Military News

BK2209130595 Colombo Sri Lanka Broadcasting Corporation International Service in English 1045 GMT 22 Sep 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] The government has imposed a censorship on military-related news with effect from midnight last night. Henceforth, all news published and transmitted within or outside Sri Lanka regarding security forces or police—including the Special Task Force, operational, and related activities—will be subjected to censorship by a competent authority.

The government has noted that certain newspapers and electronic media had published military-related news in an irresponsible manner during the past few months, threatening the security of the state and the people. Distribution of military news will not only retard a settlement to the national crisis but also break the morale of the security forces. Although this matter was explained to media representatives from time to time and they were requested to act with more responsibility, certain newspapers and media institutions had failed to respond positively, and the government was reluctantly compelled to take this step.

There are examples where other countries too had acted in this manner in a similar crisis situation. This will only be a short- term measure for a limited period, and there will be no change in the government's avowed policy of media freedom and transparency. The government requests all media institutions, media persons, and the public to cooperate and support this move, taken in the interest of national security and welfare of the nation.

Opposition Demands Debate on Censorship

BK2309094895 Hong Kong AFP in English
0443 GMT 23 Sep 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] COLOMBO, Sept 23 (AFP) — Sri Lanka's main opposition Saturday [23 September] demanded a parliamentary debate on the censorship imposed by the government on all reports relating to the military campaign against the separatist Tamil Tiger rebels.

Opposition leader Ranil Wickremesinghe said his United National Party (UNP) was seeking an early debate on the censorship slapped on both local and foreign correspondents from Thursday for the first time in six years.

"The government seems agreeable for a debate but they want to delay it as long as possible," he said charging that the censorship had been brought in for political reasons rather than any other requirement.

Statements of legislators made in parliament too are subjected to censorship if they talk about the military situation in the country.

The government hinted Friday that they may reconsider the censorship on the foreign news media, but there has been no firm decision on it yet, information ministry officials said.

Chief Censor Edmond Jayasinghe said the censorship was to prevent publication locally of war-related reports that could harm security forces and national interests.

"We take your point that it is all right for something to be published outside the country so long as it is not reproduced here. We will review the situation and see if we can have the censorship taken off the foreign press," Jayasinghe said.

The government Thursday used draconian emergency regulations to slap the blanket censorship on all matters related to the ongoing war against the rebel Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE).

The emergency gives powers to the government to seize newspaper offices, radio and television stations and news agency offices if they violate the censorship but punishment for journalists has not been spelt out.

"I don't blame all the reporters. We don't want anyone to write praising the military but at the same time there should not be irresponsible reporting that discourages everyone," Information Minister Dharmasiri Senanayake said.

The censorship was approved by the cabinet headed by President Chandrika Kumaratunga, who came to power last year on a pledge to unshackle the media and restore press freedom.

However, she has been having an uneasy relationship with most local newspapers and filed criminal defamation action against at least two newspapers.

Kumaratunga said earlier this year that the local news media published "kitchen gossip" and were leading a personnel vendetta against several individuals in the government, including herself.

"There is utter irresponsible journalism in this country. The press here should not have the freedom of the wild ass," Kumaratunga said during a meeting of the Foreign Correspondents' Association here in February.

The privately-owned English-language Island said the censorship could lead to more destructive gossip that could be counterproductive to the government's crackdown against the LTTE.

"She should well know about the oral tradition among Sri Lankans... The government may have muzzled the media but placed a far more destructive and effective medium (of rumours)," the Island said.

Government Partially Lifts Censorship

BK2609012895 Hong Kong AFP in English
1532 GMT 25 Sep 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Colombo, Sept 25 (AFP) — The Sri Lankan government Monday [25 September] lifted a censorship on foreign journalists but maintained the restriction on local publications, information director Ariya Rubasinghe said.

"From now on there is no censorship on the foreign press. This is what you asked and you need not take your dispatches to the censor for approval," Rubasinghe told AFP.

The censorship was imposed Thursday on all reports on the government's drive against the separatist Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) in the island's northern and eastern regions.

Rubasinghe said he hoped the Colombo-based foreign press will report on Sri Lanka's on going Tamil separatist war with responsibility and not threaten the national security of the country.

"I hope the foreign press will act with restraint and understand the need for us to have the censorship for the local press," he said.

Chief Censor Edmond Jayasinghe said the censorship, imposed for the first time in six years, was to prevent publication locally of war-related reports that could harm security forces and national interests.

He said there had been instances of battle plans being published in the Sunday papers even before the operations could get underway.

The LTTE is fighting for a separate state embracing the northern and eastern regions for Sri Lanka's two million minority Tamils. More than 50,000 people have been killed in the protracted ethnic conflict in the past decade.

AFP Reports on Naval Clashes With Rebels

BK2109123095 Hong Kong AFP in English
1030 GMT 21 Sep 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] COLOMBO, Sept 21 (AFP) — Sri Lankan troops have killed at least 41 Tamil Tiger rebels in the past 24 hours, including 11 members of a suicide flotilla attacking a northern naval port, defence officials said Thursday [21 September].

The navy sank four boats of the separatist Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE), including one packed with explosives, as they tried to enter the military-held Kankesanthurai port late Wednesday, officials said.

"One of the boats ... was carrying suicide-bombers. We managed to get them before they got us," said military spokesman Sarath Munasinghe.

Two security personnel were killed in an exchange of fire with the Tigers' flotilla. The navy claimed they killed at least 11 men from the Sea Tigers' unit, the LTTE's naval arm, Munasinghe said.

The suicide-bombers were after naval vessels inside the small port located in the Jaffna peninsula, a rebel stronghold.

In July, the navy foiled a similar bid by the Sea Tigers to blow up Sri Lanka's largest warship off the Kankesanthurai coast, killing several LTTE suicide-bombers.

The Sea Tigers have been responsible for a series of spectacular attacks on naval craft off the northern coast in the past year, prompting bitter press criticism of the navy's record in the war against the rebels.

Tiger frogmen blew up two warships at Trincomalee port in the northeast on April 19 which ended a three-month old truce and triggered the Tigers' renewed campaign for a separate state in the northeast for Sri Lanka's minority Tamils.

Munasinghe said security forces Wednesday also killed "a minimum of 30 LTTE cadres" during separate clashes in the outskirts of the main Palaly military base in the Jaffna peninsula.

Four soldiers were wounded, he said.

Wednesday's heavy fighting came just after the military concluded a limited offensive in the region aimed at removing Tiger mortar positions that had harassed the Palaly base in recent weeks.

Munasinghe said that troops Wednesday shot dead another LTTE cadre in eastern Batticaloa district, just hours after the rebels killed seven soldiers in eastern Ampara district.

More than 50,000 people have been killed in violence linked to the LTTE-led Tamil independence campaign.

Security Forces Reportedly Repulse LTTE Attacks

BK2209141195 Colombo Sri Lanka Broadcasting Corporation International Service in English
1045 GMT 22 Sep 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] The security forces successfully repulsed two attacks launched by the LTTE [Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam] terrorists at Punnaidaduwan and Eralai. Briefing newsmen on the security situation in the north and east, Brigadier Sarath Munasinghe told newsmen yesterday that 30 terrorists were killed in the clash, and four soldiers suffered injuries. Meanwhile, the Sri Lankan Navy used its Dvora craft to engage eight LTTE boats which tried to enter the Kankesanthurai Port at around 0600 PM yesterday from the Thondamanar and Velvettiturai areas. Four terrorists boats were destroyed by the Navy, killing 11 terrorists. Brig. Munasinghe said that the Navy also attacked the other four boats, which were sailing back to Velvettiturai. The commanding officer of the Dvora craft died in action, while an officer and a sailor suffered injuries.

A small group of terrorists attacked the security forces with bombs at Nagtuda in the Batticaloa District. Soldiers retaliated, and one terrorist was killed in the confrontation.

Defense Ministry Denies Bombing Civilian Targets

BK2609013095 Colombo DAILY NEWS in English 26 Sep 95

[Unattributed report — received via Internet]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] The Defence Ministry yesterday categorically rejected the accusation by the LTTE [Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam] that the Sri Lanka Air Force had bombed several civilian targets in the Jaffna Peninsula.

"It is not the policy of this government to engage in indiscriminate shelling of civilian areas in the Jaffna peninsula", the Ministry said.

The following is the text of the Defence Ministry communique:

"Recent reports put out by the LTTE have alleged that the Sri Lanka Air Force had bombed several civilian targets in the Jaffna peninsula.

The Ministry of Defence categorically rejects this accusation and wishes to reaffirm that it is not the policy of this government to engage in indiscriminate shelling of civilian areas in the Jaffna peninsula.

The Sri Lanka Air Force does conduct aerial attacks on carefully selected military targets of the LTTE and several bases of the LTTE sea tigers' in Velvetithurai were attacked last week. This has been necessary in order to pre-empt attacks that might be launched by the LTTE.

The government is not in a position to verify the accuracy of the Tiger claims of civilian casualties or as to the possible source of such casualties. However, if any of these casualties have taken place unintentionally in the course of attacks carried out by the Air Force, this is deeply regretted".

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